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Exploring Supervisory Needs of First-Generation Professionals Working in Higher Education

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EXPLORING SUPERVISORY NEEDS OF FIRST-GENERATION PROFESSIONALS WORKING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

EXPLORING SUPERVISORY NEEDS OF FIRST-GENERATION PROFESSIONALS WORKING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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As first-generation students enter the workforce and traverse through their careers, their work supervisors are solidly positioned to positively influence their experiences. There is very little literature to be found that addresses the professional experiences of first-generation professionals in relation to their supervisors. The purpose of this exploratory study was to learn, directly from first-generation professionals working in higher education, what they believe they need from their supervisors to support their well-being and success. This research also sought to discover how important participants thought that each need statement was, as well to gain insight to what extent the identified needs are being met. This study utilized a web-based concept mapping methodology that employed both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis. The findings of this study indicate that first-generation professionals have identified six need areas that supervisors can address to support their well-being and success. These are (a) Professional Growth and Development; (b) Institutional Onboarding; (c) Guidance and Understanding; (d) Communication and Feedback; (e) Humanity; and (f) Cultural Intelligence. This study contributes to the field of practice in higher education because it has empowered first-generation professionals to identify their unique needs specific to supervision. Equally important, garnering this information from first-generation professionals

better informs supervisors on what this population needs, and offers suggestions on how these needs can be met. This dissertation is available in open access at AURA (https://aura.antioch.edu) and OhioLINK ETD Center (https://etd.ohiolink.edu).

Keywords: first-generation, higher education, student affairs, supervision, leadership, concept mapping

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I chose Antioch University for my doctoral studies based on its mission centered on connecting passion and purpose, and growing scholar practitioners with an investment and belief in education and social action toward positive change. This journey took place amidst much societal upheaval, a global pandemic, and a myriad of personal challenges. Antioch was the right place for me to be for this: it is the first time in my higher education career that I successfully completed the program *because* of the curriculum and faculty, not *in spite of* them.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

There is an expansive body of literature describing the unique experiences of first-generation college students, as well as the varied challenges that many students confront throughout their pursuits in higher education (Aspelmeier et al., 2012). Largely, this literature speaks to what institutional strategies can be employed to foster positive transitions to support the student experience related to economic and cultural access; belonging, inclusion, and acculturation; family engagement and support; and faculty interactions and mentoring (Padgett et al., 2012).

There is far less to be found that illustrates these students' experiences after graduation, particularly experiences associated with transitions to the workplace, career outcomes, and navigating employment challenges (Hirudayaraj & Mclean, 2018). This study specifically contributes to this gap in the literature by exploring the supervisory needs of first-generation college graduates who work in the field of higher education student affairs.

To begin this exploration, it is important to acknowledge that at its best, and perhaps its most challenging, the undergraduate experience offers first-generation students new opportunities and exposes them to ideas that may be unfamiliar given their family background (Olson, 2014). Further, as noted by Collier and Morgan (2008), first-generation students navigate higher education without the benefit of being able to draw upon their parents' college experience. They must draw upon other sources of social capital, which can be defined as non-material resources that an individual accumulates through experiences, relationships, and networks used for the promotion of individual goals and societal good (Putnam, 2000).

One might infer that as first-generation students enter the workforce and begin to face professional challenges, differences in the amount of guidance or support resources they have experienced could have an impact on their well-being and success. One resource that is solidly positioned to positively influence first-generation graduates' career experience is their work supervisors. For the purposes of this dissertation, the research will be specific to formal supervisory relationships amongst professionals working outside of clinical roles within the field of higher education student affairs.

As defined by Helfgot (2005), student affairs professionals are those who work to provide the programs and services that support the academic and personal development of individuals attending college or university. Moving forward in this dissertation, the term "first-generation professional" refers to individuals who are first-generation college graduates working in the field of higher education student affairs.

With an eye toward exploring what first-generation professionals need from their supervisors to support their well-being and success, in this chapter I will describe my own positionality and experiences related to identifying as a first-generation professional and as a supervisor working within higher education. Building on this, I will introduce relevant background information that draws upon several bodies of literature that will be detailed further in Chapter II. These include the experiences of first-generation college students, an overview of supervision within the context of student affairs, and the concept of well-being.

This will provide the foundation needed to discuss the problem of supervisors being underprepared to meet the unique needs of first-generation professionals, as well as the problems first-generation professionals face in accessing and capitalizing on the supervisory

relationship as a resource. I will then clearly outline the ways in which the study's purpose will build capacity toward more effective supervision in support of first-generation professionals and discuss the significance of how this study positively contributes to the field of higher education student affairs. Finally, I will share the research questions, and the research method that was utilized.

Positionality

I situate this dissertation squarely within my own positionality as someone who supervises, amongst others, professionals who identify as first-generation (first-gen). Additionally, my own experiences of having been first in my family to attend college, complete a degree, and pursue professional roles have shaped and changed the core of who I am. These, along with my observations in supervising other first-gen professionals, shade my perspective on identity development, self-efficacy in navigating personal and institutional barriers, capacity for resilience, and informs how I approach others who are managing their own paths.

While my educational and professional journey has molded me, it has presented a myriad of opportunities to remind me that this feeling of otherness, or difference, remains consistent; first-gen status stays with you. That is to say, as I have grown into different identities along the way, "college student," "professional," "supervisor," the necessity of independently learning the appropriate systems, language jargon, and professional pathways has presented itself again and again.

As I have increased my levels of education and progressed in my career, I generally fly under the radar of being identified as different from many of my peers in the mostly "white collar" settings that I occupy. To most, I am just another middle-class, middle-aged white

woman working in higher education. The truth is that my capacity to have my first-generation, rural working-class-poor roots be an almost invisible piece of who I am has come from many years of observing (and mirroring) others in social and academic settings. Learning what words to use, when to speak up or keep quiet, what fork to use, what networking small talk sounds like, navigating power differentials, and simply learning what the standard dress might be for most any situation, has been a study in and of itself.

There are two integral components that have guided the eventual focus of this dissertation. The first are my reflections on what these hidden identities have meant to, or for, me across space and time. The second has been in the purposeful, intentional reframing of perspective: the deficits are in systems—not in first-gen students or professionals. I have appreciated my committee's insistence that I honor my, and others', respective strengths, capability, and resilience.

My initial reflections and interests in first-gen professional experiences were sparked at the beginning of my doctoral journey. Re-entering the role of "student" at the same time as taking on a new supervisory position had somehow managed to re-awaken many of my earliest doubts, feelings of being an imposter, and uncertainty about whether I had the ability to be successful. Being somewhat "closeted" in my first-gen identity through work with students, through building my career and relationships with colleagues, and eventually re-entering higher education as a doctoral student had brought forth a stark awareness of the centrality of institutional and individual contexts in seeking well-being and success.

Subgroups within our doctoral cohort shared many conversations about imposter syndrome, feeling a lack of belonging in the workplace, a lack of understanding from

supervisors and peers, experiencing the trials and tribulations of trying to find our way without much guidance from anyone, and just the uniqueness of being first-generation professionals. Through these dialogues with those in my academic cohort, as well as other professional colleagues, I became more attuned to how the people I supervise, half of whom are first-gen professionals, were fairing in their roles, seeking support and assistance from me, and just navigating their general well-being. This also set me to reflecting on my own wandering journey as a first-generation professional and generated early musings on different issues in this arena.

I wanted to know more about what literature existed about first-gen professionals. I wondered: What does the research have to offer about what other first-gen professionals identified as needs from their supervisors? What sorts of scholarship exist to better inform me as a first-gen professional about how to effectively utilize a supervisor? What role could supervision play in support of first-gen professionals? How are supervisors educated about the unique needs of first-generation professionals? Knowing the answers to these questions began to feel more and more important to me in building effective supervisory relationships with the first-generation professionals I work with. The salience of my first-gen identity also became more acute in analyzing current and past efforts to leverage supervision, or my supervisor(s) as a tool toward my own well-being and success.

As noted previously, I quickly learned that the information about, and the resources for, first-generation students are plentiful and largely written through a deficit-based lens. Similarly, while much has been written about supervision, less has been written on the subject specific to student affairs (Davis, 2010), and next to none focus on building on the strengths of professionals with minoritized identities, including those who are first-generation professionals

(R. Brown et al., 2019). It is my strong feeling that the significant gap in the literature, hence, the gap in researched-informed supervision practices with first-generation professionals, creates a barrier to being at one's best for everyone involved.

Background

This study specifically examines the supervisory needs of professionals working in higher education student affairs who were first-generation college students. Concept Mapping was used to illuminate specific critical behaviors or resources, as identified by first-generation professionals, that supervisors can offer in support of their well-being and success. Concept Mapping is a participatory mixed-method approach that engages stakeholder participants with the intent of acquiring multiple ideas and evaluative perspectives about a specific topic or issue (Kane & Trochim, 2007). The utilization of concept mapping generated conceptualizations of supervisory needs directly from the perspectives of individuals who identify as first-generation professionals working in higher education.

In order to understand what is known about first-generation students, supervisors in higher education, and well-being associated with the workplace, I conducted a review of associated literature in each of these areas. A brief background is shared here and will be expounded upon in Chapter II.

First-Generation College Students

The concept of "first-generation college student" has been described differently by different researchers across studies (Ward et al., 2012). First-generation college student is frequently generalized to refer to students who are first in their families to attend college. This generalization does not speak to the post-secondary experiences of older siblings, extended

family members, and other influential adults who have important roles in the lives of young people. Aligned with the language in the United States' Higher Education Act, some researchers have classified first-generation college status as neither parent having earned a bachelor's degree (Spiegler & Bednarek, 2013). Other studies have categorized first-generation college students to include only those students whose parents never attended college (Spiegler & Bednarek, 2013).

I am defining "first-generation graduate" as an individual whose parents or guardians did not attend or did not complete a four-year bachelor's degree prior to their enrolling in post-secondary education. First-generation graduates, for the purpose of this dissertation and participant qualifications, are individuals who applied to college and sought to persist to graduation without guidance and acculturation from parents or primary caregivers who already attended and/or graduated. I also included people who may have siblings or other extended family who may have completed a four-year degree.

Supervision

This research study specifically explored supervision within the context of higher education student affairs. At its most basic level, a supervisor can be described as an individual to whom someone reports, and has responsibility for monitoring their performance (Scheuermann, 2011). Using a similar description based on a structure of that requires one person having responsibility for another, Schuh and Carlisle (1991) suggest that supervision centers the sharing of opportunities, information, support, and evaluation.

Supervision in student affairs has also been defined as a helping process designed to support staff as they work to promote organizational goals and to enhance personal and

professional development (R. Brown et al., 2019; Winston & Creamer, 1997). I defined supervision as a direct, formal reporting structure within an institution. As a result, there is a mutual understanding of the inherent unequal power dynamic that is present within the supervisory relationship. Similar to the description put forward by Winston and Creamer (1997), supervision is an essential student affairs role that is intended to support the personal and professional growth of staff toward enhanced performance, that also functions to fulfill university goals.

The role also serves as a formal platform through which hiring, evaluation, firing, and other forms of influence take place that are associated with an individual via a title or position (Tull & Kuk, 2012). Unfortunately, as is noted by Schuh and Carlisle (1997), very few supervisors have been adequately prepared for the role. This absence of preparedness, and the effectiveness of supervision likely impacts job satisfaction, which is closely linked to employee well-being (Mullen et al., 2018).

Well-Being

Currently, there is no single accepted definition of employee well-being, therefore there is a fair amount of variation in how it is discussed in the literature. In fact, the verbiage and ideas associated with how the construct has been conceptualized has evolved over the years. The World Health Organization (WHO) provided an early definition of "health" in 1947 as a "state of complete mental, physical, and social well-being, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" (WHO, 1947, p. 1). While this description remains one of the benchmarks of health today, others have contributed to the definition by including additional dimensions of wellness.

For example, factors like intellectual, spiritual, social, and emotional health were included to descriptions in the American Journal of Health Promotion (O'Donnell, 1989).

As a part of ongoing research focused on well-being, Gallup has conducted global studies. According to Rath and Harter (2010), five distinct statistical factors emerged that they put forward as universal elements of well-being. These are career well-being, social well-being, financial well-being, physical well-being, and community well-being. The acronym PERMA is representative of five elements (positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment) that were put forward by positive psychologist Martin Seligman as well-being constructs that could also be measurable (Seligman, 2011).

As illustrated here, the term "well-being" or sometimes "wellness" has historically been used in the literature both distinctively and interchangeably with the concept of "health." For the purposes of this study, I use the term "well-being" to describe an individual's affective and cognitive evaluations of their own life, as put forward in Diener's model of subjective well-being (Diener, 1984). Applying this construct to conceptualizing how supervisors can help to support first-generation professionals, study participants operationalized their own the idea of "well-being" as it relates to workplace-specific outcomes.

Statement of the Problem

Student affairs supervisors lack information about the unique needs of first-generation professionals. In my observation and experience, first-generation students who have successfully navigated their way to the completion of a degree seemingly must begin anew in learning how to transition effectively through each level of their professional career. Specific factors that make these transitions more challenging and unique to first generation

professionals begin with the disparities that are illuminated during the undergraduate experience.

Institutions of higher education are not designed with this population in mind. As is well documented, first-generation college students are more likely than continuing generation students to come from low income backgrounds, identify as a person of color, have immigrated to the United States, work full time, and speak English as a second language (Peabody et al., 2011). Each of these identities (race, class, nationality, etc.) influence individual and institutional contexts as students enter the workplace in that the bias and discrimination students may experience impacts the development of how they see themselves fitting into professional workplace settings (Kim & Sax, 2009).

Rarely are the forms of cultural wealth that first-gen students possess valued by the higher education institutions (Yosso, 2005). Due to institutional and societal barriers, first-gen students are less likely to have had access to the resources needed to participate in the experiences and activities that bolster career readiness, such as participation in and leadership of student organizations, involvement in formal internship experiences associated with their academic major, faculty mentorship, and study abroad opportunities (Saenz et al., 2007).

First-gen professionals often experience professional success in ways that are very different from other members of their families, therefore, familial support resources are not able to effectively assist in navigating new professional contexts (Covarrubias & Fryberg, 2014). As a result, first-generation graduates may also be unsure of what to expect as they begin their professional careers (Pulliam et al., 2017), which is very similar to the entry to their collegiate experience. One might assume that first-generation professionals must look to identify other

individuals, or other means of social capital, to offer needed insights or supports in navigating new landscapes. As noted previously, a resource positioned to positively influence first generation professionals' career experience is their working supervisors.

Ashley and Epson (2013) discuss another salient dimension with the idea that coming from a lower income background may result in barriers to career advancement and belonging in the workplace. Experiencing a sense of inclusion or belonging at work is important as it contributes to a sense of purpose, feeling capable, and valued (Masterson & Stamper, 2003). Belonging in the workplace has also been linked to positively contributing to the organization, well-being, overall job satisfaction, and retention (Levett-Jones & Lathlean, 2009). Within the context of working in student affairs, Renn and Jessup-Anger (2008) suggest that within their first five years, 50–60% of new professionals leave the field. A lack of job satisfaction is cited as a primary factor influencing this exodus (Tull, 2009), while effective supervision practice has been identified as a mitigating factor in retention (Shupp & Arminio, 2012).

As professionals, our identities are a central factor that inform both our practice and how we relate to one another. As supervisors begin working with supervisees, they cannot possibly know the unique experiences, spectrum of social identities, lived experiences, and developmental journeys of each person upon their initial encounters. It is important for supervisors to recognize, however, how each of these factors, including first-generation status, influences how individuals engage with supervision and make meaning of their experiences (R. Brown et al., 2019).

Supervisors play an essential role in setting the tone and establishing a work environment that values all individuals, inclusive of diverse backgrounds and experiences

(Stock-Ward & Javorek, 2003). Unfortunately, resources specific to guiding supervisors in providing specific training, developmental experiences, or nuanced approaches to supporting the well-being and success of first-generation professionals are largely absent from the literature. This research study addresses this by illuminating specific critical behaviors or resources, as identified by first-generation professionals, that supervisors can offer in support of their well-being and success.

Purpose

The purpose of this mixed-method study was to learn what first-generation professionals believe they need from their supervisor to support their well-being and success. The findings of the study inform student affairs supervisors on the unique needs of first-generation professionals, which could also inform portions of supervisory preparation in terms of awareness and skill development, or continuing education opportunities. The research also assists first-gen professionals working in the field in identifying specific areas in their own professional development that could be supported through the supervisory relationship. Developing an understanding of what first-gen professionals need from their supervisors also has implications for staff well-being and retention, as well as career readiness programming for future student affairs professionals.

Significance

Despite the societal and institutional obstacles that first-generation college students face, they can, and do, succeed in college (Stephens et al., 2014). As they enter into the workplace, first-generation students may struggle with job search fears and frustrations, as is likely true for many new graduates. A differentiating factor for first-gen graduates is that their

families often do not have the educational or professional background to help usher them through the job search process or on to their careers (Tate et al., 2015).

For new professionals entering the field of student affairs, it is imperative that they be provided with the foundations of access to resources that are supportive and encourage reflective learning and skill development. For new professionals to start their careers successfully, they must have a strong foundation of professional skills (McGraw, 2011). Recent research demonstrates the positive associations between employee well-being, health, and key workplace-specific outcomes.

Key findings from well-being research, as they could be applied to success in the workplace, were summarized by Sturt and Nordstrom (2016). Their summation illustrated that, “employees with greater well-being have significantly increased individual and team productivity; enjoy greater job satisfaction and consequently remain an average of two years longer in their positions”; and ‘‘out-perform their peers at every skill necessary to deliver groundbreaking, difference-making great work’’ (p. 2). Further, Boehman (2007) asserted that affective attachment among student affairs professionals exists as a result of being a part of a supportive work environment. The identified components that a supportive work environment consists of were described as having adequate pay and promotions, recognition of work-life balance, empowerment, open communication, and supportive and challenging supervisors.

Achieving this level of effective supervision requires an awareness and attentiveness to the unique needs and desires of individuals (Shupp & Arminio, 2012). This study is particularly salient to this intersection of well-being, employee satisfaction and supervision in that the findings further illuminate what first generation professionals need from their supervisors to

support their well-being. Additionally, the findings of this study are important to the field as they lend to informing recommendations for improvements to training programs and skill development in supervision. Similarly, findings shed light on the areas for first-gen professionals that might otherwise be described as “you don’t know what you don’t know.”

Learning what first-generation professionals need from their supervisors contributes to the field by having empowered first-generation professionals with an opportunity to identify their unique needs specific to supervision. Equally important, garnering this information from first-gen professionals creates a better-informed context wherein supervisors are more readily empowered to meet these identified needs.

Research Questions

The findings from this study address what first-generation professionals need from their supervisors to support their well-being and success, how important each of the identified needs are, and to what extent these needs are being met. The focus prompt was: “As a first generation professional, what I need from my supervisor to support my well-being and success is _____.” While the focus prompt asks for participants to identify one thing, they were able to share as many individual idea statements as they liked. Using this data, the following research questions were answered:

1. What do first-generation professionals need from their supervisors to support their well-being and success?
2. Of the needs identified by first-generation professionals, how important is each one to the well-being and success of first-generation professionals?

3. To what extent are supervisors meeting the identified needs of first-generation professionals?

Method

The mixed method design of concept mapping was particularly advantageous in this study because it provided an equitable structure for all participants to generate qualitative data and to have voice in producing the quantitative data. Concept mapping was selected as the research method as it provides participants an equal voice in expressing their ideas, empowers them to indicate the importance of each of their needs, and allows them to name the themes that arose for them. This platform provided for a participatory process with identified stakeholder populations from idea generation through the interpretation of the data, which further undergirds the validity of data collected and its interpretation (Stoyanov et al., 2017).

This concept mapping study engaged first-generation professionals in reflections on supervision. As a research method, the concept mapping process generally follows six stages: (a) Preparation, (b) Idea Generation, (c) Idea Structuring, (d) Analysis, (e) Interpretation, and (f) Utilization (Kane & Trochim, 2007). By utilizing a mixed-methods approach to gather ideas and important perspectives across a diversity of participants, concept mapping provided a depth not possible with a simple survey.

The uniqueness of concept mapping is that it offers the benefit of participants sharing their own narrative via the qualitative idea generation phase of the research design in conjunction with quantitative and qualitative analytic techniques in the second phases. By presenting data analyses in the form of diagrams and graphs, concept mapping provides an avenue toward understanding research results that may be more accessible to the average

person. Community Cultural Wealth and Social Cognitive Career Theory serve as the theoretical frameworks through which the concept maps were analyzed.

Theoretical Framework

Research put forward by Allen et al. (2013) suggests that both social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) are integral to an individual's capacity to be successful in the job market. Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth Theory centers the knowledge and lived experiences of marginalized communities as valuable assets (capital) that can facilitate success. Community Cultural Wealth includes aspirational, navigational, social, familial, linguistic, and resistance capitals.

Based on the literature, one might infer that a first-generation professional's self-efficacy and outcome expectations would be influenced by their lived experiences and perceptions of barriers. With Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory as the foundation, Social Cognitive Career Theory centers on three variables: self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and choice goals. This framework also incorporates how historical and contextual factors impact an individual, their sense of efficacy, and expectations related to the idea of choice, and considering the impact of those choices (Lent et al., 2000).

These conceptual frameworks provided a valuable lens through which to analyze the existing literature in relationship to the first-generation experience as well as the data collected as a part of this research study. Both will be explored in more detail in Chapter II.

Summary

In summary, this chapter has offered an introduction to the experiences of first-generation college students, an overview of supervision within the context of student

affairs, and the concept of well-being. I have also identified the problem of supervisors being underprepared to meet the unique needs of first-generation professionals, as well as the problems first-generation professionals face in accessing and capitalizing on the supervisory relationship as a resource. Lastly, this chapter offered an outline of the study's purpose of researching what first-generation professionals need from their supervisor to support their well-being and success, along with a brief description of the theoretical framework that were used to analyze the concept maps.

In Chapter II, I will delve into the bodies of literature related to the experiences of higher education student affairs professionals who were first-generation college graduates, the current state of supervision in the field of higher education student affairs, and the concept of well-being. Chapter III provides a thorough explanation of the research method, concept mapping, and how it was applied to this study. Chapter IV offers an outline of the findings. Chapter V provides a discussion of the findings and presents implications for practice, along with associated recommendations, that align with leveraging the strengths, capabilities, and resiliencies of first-generation professionals. This final chapter concludes with an overview of the study limitations along with opportunities for future research.

CHAPTER II: INTRODUCTION

This dissertation explored what first-generation professionals believe they need from their supervisors to support their well-being and success. Several bodies of knowledge will serve to ground this literature review. These include the experiences of those who were first in their families to attend college; supervision and supervisor preparation within the context of student affairs; and the concept of well-being as it relates to workplace specific outcomes.

The first section of this chapter begins with a brief accounting of the literature search process. Following this, I have put forward a summary of how "first generation college student" is defined. A discussion about what is known about this population is organized by the thematic experiences of first-gen students. Namely, the identified themes are economic and cultural access; belonging, inclusion and acculturation; family engagement and support; and faculty interactions and mentoring. I will then discuss how these dynamics are reflected in, or are absent from, what little literature exists related to first-generation professionals. Subsequently, I establish how this study contributes to the knowledge base of first-generation professionals.

The second section includes a brief discussion of the historical context of supervision in that the conceptual and theoretical models of supervision within student affairs have drawn upon the expansive body of literature on counseling psychology supervision. Using several definitions of supervision put forward by other scholars as a foundation, I establish what is to be understood by the term "supervision" for the purposes of this study. Following this, the focus pivots toward a description of salient supervision models within student affairs. With the broad diversity of first-generation professionals in mind, I then explore the impact of supervisors' awareness of privilege and oppression on the supervisory relationship. This section

concludes with an accounting of different aspects of identity conscious supervision in student affairs, and how this study expounds upon the existing research specific to supervision of first-generation professionals.

The third portion of this chapter discusses the role of well-being as it relates to workplace outcomes. For the purposes of this study, I use the term "well-being" to describe an individual's affective and cognitive evaluations of their own life. This is grounded in Diener's model of subjective well-being (Diener, 1984), which I outline. Following this, I offer a discussion of the components that contribute to a higher sense of subjective well-being, and how those impact an employee's experience in the workplace and, thus, retention and productivity.

The final segment of this chapter discusses the qualities of Community Cultural Wealth and Social Cognitive Career Theory, and how they relate to the experiences of first-generation professionals. Further, I provide reasoning for how these theoretical frameworks were well-suited to provide a lens through which to view the findings of this study.

Literature Search Process

I began the literature search with a general inquiry on Google Scholar, and then with more academic resources available through both Antioch University and The Ohio State University, including WorldCat, OhioLINK, ProQuest, and EBSCOhost ERIC. The initial database adjacency searches were accessed using "first-generation" combined with one the following words: student, persistence, higher education, or college. This initial search produced a great deal of information that then also provided direction for a more specific search based on emergent themes. Thus, the second search included both phrases such as "first-generation

student and belonging," "first-generation student and cultural capital," "first-generation student and family support," and "first-generation student and faculty mentoring."

This method proved to be highly successful, so I followed the same methodology for the section on supervision. Phrases included "supervision," "models of supervision," "supervision in student affairs," "student affairs supervisor training," and "identity and supervision." Similarly, for descriptors associated with the term "well-being," the ideas of "wellness," "dimensions of wellness," "models of well-being," "workplace well-being," "belonging and supervision" all produced a fair amount of literature.

First Generation College Students

While the term "first-generation college student" may seem somewhat obvious, this review of literature made it immediately apparent that the nuances of the term would require a higher level of inquiry. First-generation college student is frequently generalized to refer to students who are first in their families to attend college. This generalization does not speak to the post-secondary experiences of older siblings, extended family members, and other influential adults who have important roles in the lives of young people.

First-generation (first-gen) students account for nearly one-third of college undergraduates in the United States (Cataldi et al., 2018), a number that is often difficult to pinpoint due to the varying definitions used across institutions, programs, and research studies. As is outlined by Ward et al. (2012), while there a good deal of research has been generated, there is no consistency in the definition of the term "first-generation college student." This creates difficulty in understanding the exact population that researchers are referring to as they

write on the topic. Generalizing or comparing information about this group can be, therefore, highly challenging.

Defining "First-Generation" College Student

First-generation student status can vary from institution to institution, therefore, also from study to study. In some cases, status is based on whether one or more of a student's parents or immediate caregivers attended any form of education after high school. Additional qualifiers may be based on whether it was a trade, two-year, or four-year higher education institution, and whether they completed a degree.

Some studies and schools use a definition based on parents never having attended college. The United States' Higher Education Act defines first-generation students as those from families wherein neither parent completed a bachelor's degree (Spiegler & Bednarek, 2013). Whitley et al. (2018) put forward a national landscape study that found that in current practice at institutions across the United States, there are at least six different definitions being used. With this, it is important to point out that these varying qualifiers impact students' eligibility for, and access to, the resources and supports designed to increase persistence and retention of this student population.

As shared in the first chapter, for the purposes of this study, I am defining "first-generation student" as an individual whose parents or guardians did not attend, or did not complete, a four-year bachelor's degree. First-generation students, for the purposes of this dissertation, are individuals who apply to college and seek to persist to graduation without guidance and acculturation from parents or primary caregivers who already attended and/or

graduated. I also included students with siblings or other extended family who may have completed a four-year degree.

Intersectionality

It is imperative to open this discussion by acknowledging that students do not solely describe themselves as "first-generation." First-generation students are much more likely to be non-white, non-traditionally aged, come from backgrounds that include poor or working-class roots, immigrants, those for whom English is a second language, and to have a disability (Lightweis, 2014). To attempt to disaggregate first-generation identity from other salient social identities suggests that students are able to stop being one part of themselves and begin being another. For example, implying that a student can stop being an immigrant and begin being first-gen; or somehow stop identifying as an immigrant at one point and begin being a person with a disability at another. This is simply not possible and understanding the intersectional experiences of first-gen students is integral to understanding their experience as a whole person.

"Intersectionality" speaks to the interrelated qualities of social identities (Crenshaw, 1989, 1991). Simply put, Crenshaw coined the term "intersectionality" as an understanding of the fact that race, class, gender, and sexuality always exist in relation to one another. That is to say that an individual who is a first-gen student, plus a person of color, plus an older adult, experiences these identities simultaneously, and the minoritized impact of each is compounded by the other(s). Given that all social identities are inextricable from one another, and each student has a unique lived experience in relationship to all the identities that they hold, this

review of literature seeks to amalgamate what is known, while being sensitive to the fact that first generation college students are not a monolithic group.

Cultural and Economic Capital

Social and cultural capital is integral to student retention and persistence (Nichols & Islas, 2016). Bourdieu (1986) put forth that "capital" can be cultural, most often defined by family or social position, or it can be economic. According to Bourdieu (1986), cultural capital gives proximity to "legitimate" culture which is often characterized by the taken for granted nature of certain forms of knowledge and practiced norms. Similarly, Braxton et al. (2014) illustrated that higher levels of cultural capital equate to higher levels of engagement and social inclusion. However, Gardner and Holley (2011) put forth that the elements of cultural capital that are deemed to be most legitimate are elements of culture that are perpetuated by those who hold dominant identities in relationship to race, class, gender, etc. Applied to the lived experiences of first-generation students, this difference in capital results in difficulties that can include managing faculty's academic expectations, how involved a student can be in co-curricular activities, and whether they complete a degree (Unverferth et al., 2012).

The work of Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) has been cited by a number of studies in the field of educational access inequality. They assert that some institutional structures can create disparities by maintaining or reinforcing dominant cultural norms while serving to oppress others (Dumais & Ward, 2010). The idea of social capital is that access to resources is based on relationships; therefore, students who have more social capital fare better than those who do not (Nichols & Islas, 2016).

Many first-generation students are classified “working-class” based on the level of education completed, as well as the type of work or level of income that their parents have achieved (Petty, 2014). Related to this, in contrast to continuing generation students, those who are first-gen are more likely to assume that there will be barriers to their own success and ability to graduate (Unverferth et al., 2012). In other words, not only is it a reality, but students also perceive this to be a pre-determined inevitability. There are a fair number of obstacles that first-generation college students face related to access and equity throughout their academic career. Spiegler and Bednarek (2013) summarized this by describing this student population as an at-risk group who struggles to acclimate to campus culture both in terms of academic and social expectations. What is more rarely explored are the reasons why “campus culture” fails to acclimate to the cultural norms of its minoritized student communities.

Because of underfunded and overpopulated schools, these students are often academically underprepared, which results in their being required to complete pre-requisite or additional introductory classes before they can begin seeking credits in the major area of the degree they are seeking. Wiggins (2011) demonstrated that due to varying socioeconomic disparities, first-generation students have housing and socioeconomic concerns related to maintaining a job while enrolled, navigating access to financial aid, and seeking off-campus housing to reduce living expenses. In turn, time spent working instead of studying or building on-campus relationships results in differences in social capital.

Disparities in access to educational opportunities continue to persist, especially for historically marginalized populations. First-generation students of color face distinctive barriers to well-being and success, such as racism, that results in a lack of sense of belong or inclusion.

This is particularly true on campuses that are predominantly white (McCoy, 2014). In short, as put forward by Spiegler and Bednarek (2013), feelings of isolation lead to first-generation students often merely surviving, not thriving within higher education.

Belonging, Inclusion, and Acculturation

Developing a sense of belonging has been identified as one of the primary factors that impacts academic motivation, success, and persistence (Jehangir et al., 2015). Strayhorn (2012) explained that belonging develops to the "degree to which individuals feel respected, valued, accepted, and needed by a defined group" (p. 87). It has also been described as a phenomenon that "captures the individual's view of whether he or she feels included in the college community" (Hurtado & Carter, 1997, p. 327). Researchers have suggested that campus and community involvement is associated with a sense of belonging (Strayhorn, 2012).

Unfortunately, Petty (2014) found that first-generation college students are less likely than their continuing-generation peers to be involved in the co-curricular activities that are often characterized as central to the collegiate experience. As mentioned earlier, many first-gen college students need to work to subsidize the cost of their education. Equally as unfortunate, student activities that contribute positively to student success both inside and outside the classroom like student organizations, volunteerism, study abroad, and cultural centers are often not set up to meet diverse student needs outside of "traditional" programming hours. This contributes to a lack of a sense of belonging. Further illustrating the negative impact of a lack of access to campus resources, Stephens et al. (2012) found that feeling like one belonged to the campus community and working with peers reduced the performance gap between students who identified as first-generation and those who did not.

Azmitia et al. (2018) found that for racially minoritized students, feeling as though the campus climate was not accepting of difference, or more precisely was accepting of racist ideals, negatively affected students' sense of belonging. This is particularly true amongst Black students (Chavous, 2005). In seeking to learn about the issue of sense of belonging with Asian and Mexican students, Lee and Davis (2000) and Velasquez (1999) considered measures of acculturation within these communities.

In both studies, they found that students who had a positive self-concept in relationship to their racial/ethnic identity as well as close ties to their cultural traditions were more likely to feel a sense of connection and belonging at their institutions than those students who had weaker cultural orientations or negative perceptions of their cultural identities. Both Velasquez (1999) and Lee and Davis (2000) went on to suggest that having a bicultural orientation or bicultural experiences assisted students in feeling more adept at adjusting to college life. This connects with the importance of embracing Community Cultural Wealth (Yosso, 2005).

It is not uncommon for first-generation students to feel lonely or alone. As they seek to become acclimated to campus culture, they may feel a disconnect from their families and communities of origin. At the same time, as outlined previously, first-gen students often do not readily fit into the middle or upper-classed norms that are present on many college campuses, which presents a disconnect in this space as well. The new learning and experiences that are not familiar to their families or home communities exacerbate this feeling of division, distance, and change (Jehangir et al., 2015).

Family Engagement and Support

The reality of what higher education is and the ideas of what life might be like on campus is frequently different from what students and families might assume (Longwell-Grice et al., 2016). Often, both find it difficult to adjust due to the aforementioned middle- and upper-class norms that are prevalent; their lived experiences have not necessarily afforded them the influence and power associated with this type of social capital (Apfelbaum et al., 2016). Because of this, students often struggle transitioning into unfamiliar cultural norms that make up their day-to-day experience, seeking academic support from faculty and staff, and finding ways to navigate the changes that occur in familial relationships.

Longwell-Grice et al. (2016) found that a significant factor impacting whether young adults aspire to enroll in college is strong encouragement and support from parents. This holds true regardless of the parents' level of education. It is noteworthy that students who are first in their families to seek out four-year degrees often experience lower levels of parent-driven collegiate expectations, social and academic support than their peers who come from families wherein parents do have a degree (Horn & Nunez, 2000).

Attending college is a life changing experience often referenced as a rite of passage for young adults. For some first-gen students, this transition is made with the support of parents and siblings; for others, they make the transition without familial support (Cox & Paley, 1997). Several factors are at play concerning these lower levels of parental encouragement and support.

According to Bourdieu (1977), those who come from families that are experienced with higher education, and whose parents hold a degree, are far more likely to have access to the

cultural and social capital that provides a clearer path toward opportunity in terms of education and financial resources. Lacking an understanding of how to navigate all the systems associated with higher education, being unfamiliar with the college experience, and being a part of communities wherein not many others have this experience, sets the stage for this inequity (Martin et al., 2014).

Specifically, many institutions are not meeting first-gen families' needs in relation to knowledge about many of the most crucial aspects of engaging with higher education. These include the college application process, financial aid applications, seeking scholarships, academic advising and class scheduling, and housing. In these cases, the best that parents and families can offer is emotional support because they do not have access to the knowledge and benefit of lived experience to contribute (Stephens et al., 2015). Therefore, they are less likely to hold the types of capital that are associated with the lived experiences of the middle or upper-class (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990). As previously stated, the cultural norms of the middle or upper-class are predominate in higher education.

For some first-generation students, their families do not understand why they even want to go to college, and some discourage attendance due to concerns over debt and other familial responsibilities (Ou & Reynolds, 2014). Some parents may discourage their children from pursuing post-secondary education because they lack pertinent information or have misperceptions about college costs and financial aid (Vargas, 2004). In some situations, there may also be a familial expectation that children help to financially support the family by entering the workforce directly after high school. For example, a study of Latin American immigrants in California found that children were responsible for cleaning, running errands,

caring for siblings, and translating for their parents. Many young adults assisted in supporting their families through paid work, such as mowing lawns, cleaning houses, or serving food in a family-run restaurant (Orellana, 2001).

In addition to parental or family support, many first-gen college students are non-traditional students who have their own families and financial responsibilities (Radwin et al., 2018). In these cases, work and family responsibilities can create enormous pressures, as they try to balance obligations to employers with the time required for study and being present for the family. Herein, issues of access become particularly apparent. Anecdotal stories shared with me by former students include the fact that required classes may not be offered outside of work hours, or an employer may require that a student change his or her work schedule without regard to the classes the student is taking. Lastly, adequate and affordable child care is frequently unavailable.

The experiences outlined above are not true for all first-gen students; going to college is a shared family goal for some. According to Sandoval-Lucero et al. (2014), family support that comes in the form of emotional support, encouragement, helping out financially, or agreeing to take on some of the student's household familial responsibilities have all been associated with better academic performance for first-gen students. For some families, particularly immigrant communities, college attendance is a point of pride, and is regarded as evidence that the family is succeeding (Wang, 2012). Many first-generation students view their education as an opportunity to become financially stable and to support their families in the future (Boden, 2011).

Family support, or lack thereof, can affect persistence in first-generation students. Some students may feel judged by or disconnected from friends and family as a result of seeking to attain high educational aspirations (Davis, 2010). Some students experience difficulties persisting because their home culture is so radically different from campus culture. Students whose parents did complete a college degree are more likely to be academically successful and are more easily able to adjust to college life than are first-generation students (Rothon et al., 2012).

Creating structured opportunities for first-in-family young adults to develop relationships with other adult role models or mentors can have a substantial impact on how potential college students perceive higher education. Similarly, these relationships positively contribute to the likelihood of college attendance and the self-efficacy needed to persist beyond real or perceived obstacles that are associated with their background and experiences (Stanton-Salazar & Spina, 2003). For this reason, first-generation students' opportunities to establish connections with university faculty and staff who can provide guidance and mentoring in navigating the potential dissonance of home and academic contexts can be pivotal in their capacity to persist.

Faculty and Staff Interactions

Relationships with supportive non-parental adults are crucial as youth transition from high school to college and become increasingly independent (Hurd et al., 2014). Bers and Schuetz (2014) suggest that as first-gen students transition into college, positive interactions and relationship building with instructors, staff, and academic advisors help to build students' confidence. Further, faculty and other instructors who are accessible and offer positive

reinforcement assist in contributing positively to first-gen students adjusting to the academic environment of campus (Sandoval-Lucero et al., 2014). These meaningful relationships with faculty also support success both academically and socially, which in turn lend to the retention and persistence of students (Kim & Sax, 2009).

Given the previously discussed fact that first-gen students often have jobs, family responsibilities, and do not live on campus, they are less likely to be connecting with other students and their instructors outside of the time that they spend in class (Engle & Tinto, 2008). As noted by Kim and Sax (2009), compared to middle- or upper-class or continuing generation students, low-income and first-generation students are more often excluded from faculty interaction, whether it is research-related or course-related. An illustration of one of the outcomes of this is presented by Longwell-Grice and Longwell-Grice (2008). Their research demonstrated that forming these types of meaningful relationships between students and faculty increase the persistence of first-generation students; however, their research also established a pattern of resistance or apathy to building these relationships, particularly among male identified students. Similarly, Pascarella et al. (2004) purported that first-generation students, particularly those from low-income and working-class backgrounds, did not seek out or seek to maintain these interactions with faculty and staff.

Factors that may contribute to the reticence to reach out may be based in feeling as though others on campus are not invested in their success or well-being. First-generation students of color, as well as those who identify as immigrants, report that they were not prepared for the amount of racial hostility and feelings of isolation that they experience on campus (Pike & Kuh, 2005). The delivery of culturally relevant instruction and the development

of inclusive learning environments assist in mitigating achievement differences between students who are more privileged and those who have experienced disadvantages (Gillian-Daniel & Kraemer, 2015).

To have an impact on how first-gen students experience college, Museus and Quaye (2009) suggest that the role of faculty and staff is to serve as cultural agents linking students to culturally affirming classroom experiences, campus resources that affirm minoritized social identities, and other culturally relevant learning spaces. Moreover, by assisting students in building relationships with peers and creating culturally relevant learning opportunities, faculty can be an impactful resource to, and develop positive mentoring interactions with, students whether as a part of their teaching or not (Engle & Tinto, 2008).

Mentoring

The strength of peer relationships and mentoring connections on campus can have a significant impact on students, particularly when staff and faculty are a part of this resource network. Closely correlated to this are the outcomes that students experience in relationship to development of critical thinking skills, growing social capital, and enhancing academic success (Umbach & Wawrzynski, 2005). According to St. John et al. (2015), when relationship building comes in the form of mentoring that is designed to increase understanding of the institution's structure, this creates a window of opportunity for students to have access to a path toward successfully navigating university systems and an understanding of campus culture. In turn, students are thus empowered in developing their own social and navigational capital.

Students who can identify at least one faculty mentor perform better in their classes and matriculate to their second year at higher rates than students who do not (Campbell &

Campbell, 1997). Mentoring can also address several of the previously identified risk areas by increasing a sense of self-efficacy, belonging and community connection (Rhodes et al., 2006). When a student believes that they share an identity with or have had similar lived experiences as their mentor, they are more open to trying out different cultural norms and perspectives (Wang, 2012). This can be particularly impactful if the student is working through some of the familial disconnect that was discussed previously (Lohfink & Paulsen, 2005). Further, this guidance and support could be a model for successful relationship building with a supervisor as they transition into the workplace.

First Generation Graduates Entering the Workplace

Entry into the workplace and a career is a significant life transition for most graduating college students. Based on what is known about their move into and through undergraduate education, one could deduce that this transition consists of unique factors for first-generation college graduates. Much of the existing scholarship that centers first-gen graduates focuses on continued education via master's or doctoral pursuits in higher education (Lopez, 2014). While very little research has been done that focuses on career and workplace experiences of first-gen graduates, what does exist reflects some similarities to factors identified as a part of the student experience.

Cultural and economic capital are particularly salient to the discussion about the experiences of first-generation professionals. According to Furlong and Cartmel (2005), graduates from lower socioeconomic statuses often lacked access to the social and cultural capital that would help facilitate an understanding of the importance of soft skills, development of career management skills, and awareness about career planning in general. Kazi and Akhlaq

(2017) affirm that a student's home, school, and social influences have an impact on their career choice. Each of these influences how self-efficacy, developed through their time in college, help to create career aspirations (Smith, 2002). It is significant to note that Lent et al. (1994) offered a description of self-efficacy that indicates that confidence in ability to be successful is unique to performance domains. That is to say that just because an individual enacts a high degree of self-efficacy as a student learner does not mean that this same level of certainty in their ability to achieve success will exist for that same individual learning a new job.

To assist and be present for family, it is not uncommon for first-generation graduates to choose to seek a job close to home, which may limit the professional opportunities available to them (Wheeler, 2016). This may also result in exacerbated family tensions. In a study on first-gen graduate students, Leyva (2011) found that as emerging professional identities and changes in social economic status reflect a shift from cultural and ethnic tradition, family dynamics become more complicated. First-gen graduates, by definition, are pursuing a life that is different from others in their family and different than the blue-collar work examples with which many have been accustomed. Further, the description of what constitutes "work" may be an area of dissonance in that working in white-collar settings often looks and feels different than the more physical labor that is more often present in blue-collar jobs, contributing to feeling that what they are doing isn't real work (Holley & Gardner, 2012).

Additional significant factors that impact the career development of first-gen graduates are the social identities they hold. White, middle, and upper-class norms are prevalent in white-collar workplaces. Bias in terms of values in hiring, relationship building, and career development may negatively impact those with minoritized identities (Rivera, 2015). Associated

with this, Nuñez and Sansone (2016) highlighted that socio-political context related to identity-based unrest, such as racial violence, immigration status debates and gender bias, also influences how new graduates see themselves fitting into new workplaces.

Garrison and Gardner (2012) found that during their undergraduate careers, first-gen students frequently sought out professional resources to assist in their successful navigation of new social contexts, academic struggles, and personal uncertainties. Huber (2010) called attention to the propensity of new professionals in the engineering field to continue this resourcing by seeking out professional mentors not only to learn their new roles but also to navigate the workplace culture. This is particularly important because employees' sense of belonging and real or perceived cultural fit in the workplace impacts their performance and retention (Chatman et al., 2014).

Many first-gen students were able matriculate successfully to a bachelor's degree by initiating the creation of their own information and support networks, including parents of friends, university staff, and other mentors (Garrison & Gardner, 2012). By positioning a workplace supervisor as a similar touchpoint, this study asked first-gen professionals to identify specific things that they need that will support their well-being and success.

Supervision

In my observation, many new graduates transitioning into the workplace struggle with a lack of confidence and learning new tasks and skills. One might suggest that the unique circumstance for first-generation professionals is that in addition to these typical struggles, many of the systems supporting school to work transitions have been designed without them in mind. As an example, when one considers the skill of navigating unspoken office dress-codes,

some new first-gen professionals may not have a point of reference for family support or having observed such contexts as a part of their growing up experience. This is also not often addressed as a part of institutional new-employee orientations.

Within the field of higher education and student affairs, a resource that is consistently engaged in offering guidance and support is their work supervisor. With the intent to understand supervision, specifically supervision within student affairs as applied to working with first-generation professionals, the purpose of this section is four-fold.

It is imperative that a shared understanding of what I mean by "supervision" is established. I will offer several definitions of supervision that have previously been put forward by scholars across different fields. Using these as a foundation, I will establish the definition of supervision that I intend to use in this study. Second, I will pivot toward providing an overview of salient supervision models that have been applied within student affairs. With an eye toward effectively working with the broad diversity of first-generation professionals, I will then explore the impact of supervisors' awareness of identity, privilege, and oppression on the supervisory relationship. A significant component will be grounded in describing aspects of identity-conscious supervision in student affairs. The final discussion will be focused on supervisor training and preparedness.

Defining Supervision

At the outset of determining a definition of supervision, one might assume that it would be simple enough. Commonly, the term "supervision" brings forth a general idea of one's experiences of having had a supervisor or being a supervisor. Upon greater scrutiny, it is difficult to definitively offer a singular definition because both scholars and practitioners have

presented a wide range of descriptions both across different disciplines and within student affairs professions.

As described by Scheuermann (2011), a staff member who is responsible for the performance of another staff member or has a direct report, is a supervisor. Schuh and Carlisle (1991) suggest that supervision centers the sharing of opportunities, information, support, and evaluation. Supervision in student affairs has also been defined as a practice structured to support staff in their personal and professional development and to promote organizational goals (R. Brown et al., 2019; Winston & Creamer, 1997).

Description of Supervision to Be Used Moving Forward

Having taken these different ideas of supervision into consideration and become more aware of some of the differing tenets used to define supervision, I define supervision as a direct, formal reporting structure within an institution. As a result, there is a mutual understanding of the inherently unequal power dynamic present within the supervisory relationship. Similar to the description put forward by Winston and Creamer (1997), supervision is an essential student affairs role that is intended to support the personal and professional growth of staff toward enhanced performance, which also functions to fulfill university goals. The role also serves as a formal platform through which hiring, evaluation, firing, and other forms of influence associated with title or position (Tull & Kuk, 2012).

Supervision is integral to the development of all staff throughout the timespan of and through all stages/levels of one's career, and all levels of the institution. Meaningful supervisory constructs are structured yet fluid and flexible, with the primary focus on developing a supervisory relationship that is specifically responsive to an individual's unique identities,

background, experiences, and developmental needs. As described by Holloway (1995), this relationship is a primary tool for dynamically navigating stakeholder expectations and supervisee development within a system.

Given these descriptions of the purpose of supervision, it is recognized that supervision involves dedicated time, focused interactions, and intentional outcomes. Due to hierarchical power differentials and role responsibilities, the supervisor carries a significant amount of responsibility to ensure that the supervisory relationship is valuable and productive. However, this description of supervision is grounded in the expectation that there is shared investment in the relationship, entailing ongoing positive communication, and shared agency in identifying and meeting developmental goals.

Models of Supervision Within Student Affairs

Colleges and universities, specifically departments of student affairs, are notoriously lacking in training and development of supervisors (Winston & Creamer, 1997). Perhaps in part because compared to other helping professions such as counseling, teaching, and social work, there is no formalized training of supervisors (Dalton, 1996). In fact, there are relatively few theoretical models or approaches to supervision within student affairs (Stock-Ward & Javorek, 2003).

According to Saunders et al. (2000), supervision is frequently diminished to managing daily tasks and administrative duties without addressing the professional development needs of supervisees. For example, Dalton (1996) squarely positions student affairs supervision within the realm of being responsible for performance goals, outcome measurement, and training. In contrast, Winston and Creamer (1997) describe supervision in higher education as “a

management function intended to promote the achievement of institutional goals and enhance the personal and professional capabilities of staff. Supervision interprets the institutional mission and focuses human and fiscal resources on the promotion of individual and organizational competence" (p. 42).

Winston and Creamer (1997) introduced the concept of synergistic supervision as a framework for supervision. This model offers "a cooperative effort between the supervisor and the staff member that allows the effect of their joint efforts to be greater than the sum of their individual contributions" (Winston & Creamer, 1997, p. 196). The model's primary components include (a) dual focus, (b) joint effort, (c) two-way communication, (d) focus on competence, (e) goal setting and attainment, (f) being a systematic and ongoing process; and (g) orientation towards employee growth and development (Winston & Creamer, 1997).

The synergistic supervision model is the most recognized and most cited framework within the field of student affairs. The purported strengths of the model are that the dynamics of the relationship between the supervisor and supervisee attend to the supervisee's experience as a whole person. Winston and Creamer (1997) posit that if one feels cared for and experiences a shared investment between themselves and their supervisor, they are more likely to stay engaged in the role and the institution. In this way, both the supervisor and supervisee are collaborating to achieve organizational goals at the same time as working to fulfill individual aspirations (Winston & Creamer, 1997).

Building on Winston and Creamer's ideas, Arminio and Creamer (2001) developed this description of effective supervision:

> Quality supervision is an educational endeavor demonstrated through principled practices with a dual focus on institutional and individual needs. It requires (a) synergistic relationships between supervisor and staff members, (b) ubiquitous involvement with and constant nurturing of staff members and (c) a stable and supportive institutional environment to be effective. (p. 42)

While the synergistic model has been used with staff at a myriad of stages in their careers, research has found it to be particularly useful in working with new professionals (Tull, 2006). With regard to supervising employees at different stages in their career, Janosik and Creamer (2003) offer the idea that supervisory relationships should be aligned with meeting the different developmental needs of a supervisee at different levels of their careers (new professionals, mid-career professionals, professionals in senior leadership).

Only Stock-Ward and Javorek (2003) have proposed a developmental model of supervision for student affairs. It is based on the Integrated Developmental Model derived from counseling psychology supervision (Stoltenberg & McNeill, 1997). Using the structure of three levels that engage a supervisee from entering student affairs as a new professional through having developed expertise in the field, Stock-Ward and Javorek (2003) offer both descriptions and strategies that can be applied. As is true when applied in clinical supervision, the focus of the supervision relationship as applied in student affairs is on the growth and development of the supervisee.

In Level One, a primary task is rapport building and development of trust within the supervisor relationship. This is imperative in terms of the new employee being able to discuss mistakes, ask for help, and to work within a structure to increase self-efficacy and confidence in their role. Stock-Ward and Javorek (2003) go on to note the strategy of providing role play or case studies in addition to modeling behaviors or decision-making factors as strategies to

growth. The authors suggest that Level Two requires a great deal of observational assessment and flexibility form the supervisor, as they must ascertain a supervisee's understanding of the work and capacity to problem-solve autonomously. Another prominent task is establishing the employment of reflective practices toward increasing personal insight related to their own value system and knowing what ways these impacts how they navigate their professional role. Level Three supervisees have a firm grounding in their role and are adept at setting the supervision agenda to meet their needs. It is at this level that the supervisory relationship becomes more collegial and less prescriptive (Stock-Ward and Javorek, 2003).

As with most helping professions, student affairs professionals are engaged in practice that results in learning, while simultaneously engaging in the learning that occurs through supervision. Implicit in this is an institutional expectation that the developmental needs of the students being served must also be met. As was outlined earlier in this paper, it is my view that a supervisory relationship can, if intentionally structured to do so, be a "container" that holds both the organization's and supervisee's needs. As Dalton (2006) suggested, supervision includes an assessment of performance and outcomes. These reflect the enacted ongoing collaborative learning processes that increase the supervisee's competence that is championed by Winston and Creamer's (1997) synergistic model. The activities of building rapport and working to identify growth areas, while engaging in activities that will foster progression related to required proficiencies as offered by Stock-Ward and Javorek (2003) further serve to support the shared investment in success at both and institutional and individual level.

Impact of Supervisor Identity, Privilege and Oppression Awareness

Consciousness of the impact of privileged and marginalized social identities within the supervisory relationship must be carefully considered. Predominant understandings of positionality associated with identities such as race, ethnicity, gender identity, nationality, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, ability, or religious affiliation, impact social norms and interpersonal interactions. Referencing counseling supervision, Martínez and Holloway (1997) put forward the benefits of ongoing discussions about race and multiculturalism as a method toward establishing safer opportunities for supervisors to model the importance of practitioner awareness of cultural and other identity-based factors both in practice and supervision.

As espoused by Baxter Magolda (2004), intrapersonal development, i.e., how a person makes sense of who they are and what they value, influences the supervisory relationship. This meaning making takes place within a culture wherein individuals are socialized in ways that perpetuate identity-based inequities. While often unconscious and unintentional, the resulting perceptions of value and self-efficacy are no less impactful.

In exploring power differentials, Holloway and Wolleat (1994) write,

> Although the accumulation of power is at least partly under the control of the individual, cultural roles, gender stereotypes, and practices of socialization inherent in the culture in general and in the professional practice setting specifically are critical obstacles, especially for women in this quest. (p. 32)

Simply put, certain individuals may hold privileged positions merely by virtue of their authority, expertise, or membership in a dominant social identity group(s). This further serves to impact power differentials inherent in supervisory relationships. Based on the intersections of identities and lived experiences of the supervisor and supervisee, supervision is experienced differently and must be contextual (Roper, 2011).

Supervisors who have not actively explored societal issues of dominant and subordinated identities are more likely to exhibit bias, hold stereotypes, and operate from a perspective that is not attuned to cultural factors (Berger et al., 2014). Certainly, this has the potential to result in a negative impact on the supervisory relationship. One might also assert that lack of insight may also negatively impact supervisors' capacity to offer coaching and insight to supervisees as they work across difference in providing programs and services with students. While there is a great deal of discourse in student affairs literature related to identity consciousness in working with students, there is very little written on the topic in relationship to supervision.

Identity Conscious Supervision in Student Affairs

The ability to effectively build relationships, communicate with cultural humility and navigate identity-conscious supervisory dynamics begins with an understanding of self. Perillo (2011) suggests that it is imperative that supervisors commit to their own growth and development as a professional. With this, the author also offers a description of what inclusive supervision entails,

> Inclusive practice involves multicultural competence. Increasing human diversity requires supervisors to be culturally competent. Colorblind supervision minimizes human experience and can easily make staff members feel invisible...Understanding and managing diversity is essential to the successful attainment of organizational goals and thus should be of significant concern to supervisors. (Perillo, 2011, pp. 430–431)

In discussing strategies toward creating more culturally inclusive environments within higher education, Arminio et al. (2012) advise that student affairs professionals must begin by raising their own awareness of how their personal beliefs, values, attitudes, and behaviors impact those around them.

Supervising across culture and difference was addressed by Roper (2011) who suggested that supervisors should learn supervisees individually to have clarity about the salience of particular identities for each of them. An identity neutral approach to supervision only perpetuates systemic bias individuals with marginalized identities already face (R. Brown et al., 2019). Supervisors who actively show an interest in identities and cultures outside of their own and demonstrate a positive perspective on difference, are more able to form supervisory relationships that promote a trusting, open environment (Killian, 2001). Further, this also creates space for shared vulnerability in cultural sharing and learning. Roper (2011) put forward the necessity of practicing from a place of humility that would enable an appropriate level of transparency about the dimensions of identity or experience that one needs to learn more about to work effectively within a supervisory relationship.

Supervisor Preparedness

There is a great deal of research that illustrates the fact that supervisors within the field of student affairs have received very little training in advance of their taking on the role (Shupp & Arminio, 2012). In fact, there may be some ambiguity about when and how such preparation could or should take place. As summarized by Holmes (2014), “student affairs departments assume that supervision is learned in graduate preparation programs, and academic programs believe that supervision is learned on the job” (p. 64). Those who are mid-career or have taken on managerial roles typically do not have the benefit of formalized training (Wood et al., 1985); at the same time, newer professionals do not feel prepared or ready to supervise (Waple, 2006).

In contrast, the field of clinical psychology has developed and researched models of supervision since the 1960s. In fact, supervision has been established as a specific specialty certificate across clinical fields such as social work and clinical psychology (Borders et al., 2014). Similarly, in fields such as teacher education, endorsement and certificate programs have been developed to prepare educators to supervise student teachers through their field practice. The impact of a lack of formalized supervisor development in student affairs is multi-spoked, and one might say that employee well-being is at the center of this proverbial wheel.

Well-Being

I begin this section by defining the constantly evolving idea of well-being as a concept. Using this as a grounding principle, I establish subjective well-being as the specific construct to be used in this study. The factors that influence subjective well-being will then be described, followed by a discussion of how these factors reflect the themes that are present in literature centering first-generation students. This section concludes by examining how one's supervisory experience impacts these factors in the workplace.

Defining Well-Being

The concept of well-being has been studied across a myriad of disciplines ranging from psychology and sociology to political science and public health. As a result, there is not one definitive definition of well-being, nor any one philosophy that transcends these fields (Forgeard et al., 2011). As noted previously, the verbiage and ideas associated with how well-being has been conceptualized has evolved over the years.

The World Health Organization (WHO) provided an early definition of "health" in 1947 as a state of complete mental, physical, and social well-being, not merely the absence of

disease or infirmity (WHO, 1947, p. 1). While this description remains one of the benchmarks of health today, others have contributed to the definition by including additional dimensions of wellness. As an example, factors like intellectual, spiritual, social, and emotional health were included to descriptions in the American Journal of Health Promotion (O'Donnell, 1989, 2009). While the terms "health," "wellness," and "well-being" were historically used in the literature somewhat interchangeably, more recent literature has brought forward distinctive, inter-related dimensions to consider as components of well-being.

Huppert (2017) suggested that the concepts of resilience, quality of life, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and self-determination are all related to well-being. Stiglitz et al. (2009) offered that "well-being" should be considered multi-dimensional since factors such as social connections, education, environmental and economic safety, and political voice were so present in the research that they reviewed. Referencing Gallup's ongoing research conducting global studies, Rath and Harter (2010) put forward five distinct statistical factors emerged that they put forward as universal elements of well-being. These are career well-being, social well-being, financial well-being, physical well-being, and community well-being.

Ryff (1995) discussed a parallel line of research being done in the field of psychology. This work had also begun to describe well-being, specifically mental well-being, as not only the absence of mental illness, but also the presence of positive functioning (Ryff, 1995). The domain of a positive psychological state grounded Diener's (1984) idea of subjective well-being.

Subjective Well-Being

Subjective well-being is a psychological construct that describes, "the experience of joy, contentment, or positive well-being, combined with a sense that one's life is good, meaningful,

and worthwhile" (Lyubomirsky, 2013, p. 32). Consisting of three components, subject well-being reflects affective and cognitive evaluations of a person's life from her or his own perspective (Diener, 1984). The three components associated with subjective well-being are frequent positive affect, infrequent negative affect; and cognitive evaluations of one's life satisfaction (Diener, 1984; Tov & Diener, 2013). Because individuals draw conclusions from their assessment of satisfaction (e.g., "Things are going really well!") using their affective or emotional experiences (e.g., "I'm feeling really happy"), the components are considered distinct from one another, yet inter-related and measurable (Tov & Diener, 2013).

There is a vast body of research discussing the influences and impact of subjective well-being (Diener et al., 2017). The primary factors that have emerged to identify what contributes to subjective well-being fall into three theoretical arenas: biology and temperament, needs and goal satisfaction, and mental state.

Theories of Subjective Well-Being

Also known as set-point theories, biological or temperament theories of subjective well-being point to biology and genetics to explain why some people are happier than others (Lyubomirsky & Dickerhoof, 2010). These theories also suggest that despite periodic highs or lows, most people will consistently return to a base line (Suh et al., 1996).

Theories of subjective well-being that have to do with needs and goals are primarily centered on the extent to which an individual's needs have been met, and whether, in their own assessment, they have successfully met their goals (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008). Further, Lyubomirsky and Dickerhoof (2010) suggest that if an individual has been well resourced in terms of factors like financial, social, and emotional capital as well as having had

few negative or traumatic life experiences, they will have greater subjective well-being than those who have not. Last, theories grounded in one's mental state relate to one's interpretations of or beliefs about life events, i.e., one's cognitive process of making sense of their lot in life in comparison to others (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008).

As illustrated across the spectrum of these measures, subjective well-being encompasses a personal assessment of both lived experiences, one's current state, and expectations for the future. Understanding the different ways that an individual may come to assessing their own well-being, or their personal needs for well-being, as well as what general factors contribute to a sense of well-being, is an essential dynamic to be aware of in approaching this study with first-generation professionals.

Salient Factors Impacting Well-Being

Differentiating between the objective facts about an individual's life (i.e., how much money they have, how they identify, or what they have experienced) and the subjective notion of how someone thinks and feels about their life circumstances is the core component of subjective well-being. It is also the reason I have chosen this construct to undergird my description of "well-being" in this study with first generation professionals. I have chosen the work of Seligman (2011, 2018) and Helliwell et al. (2017) as reference points to link the themes that arose within the literature centering first-gen students to this smaller set of elements that contribute to well-being.

PERMA, which is an acronym representative of the concepts of positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment was put forward as a measurable construct of well-being by positive psychologist Martin Seligman (Seligman, 2011). Seligman

(2018) further elaborated that PERMA is not a new model of well-being, or synonymous with subjective well-being. Instead, he suggests that the PERMA elements are the building blocks to subjective well-being. Helliwell et al. (2017) presented a two-fold measure. The first focused on daily events and the positive and negative emotions associated with those; the second centered on one's lived experience, including environmental, social, familial, and work relationships.

Belonging, inclusion, and acculturation; role of family engagement and support; and effect of faculty interactions and mentoring were all identified in this literature review as factors that impact the well-being and success of first-generation students. One might infer that social and cultural capital, along with coping skills and resources that were successful in managing undergraduate education, also carry forward into one's professional career. The supervisory experience plays a key component to navigating the domain of the workplace across one's career.

Supervisor Impact on Well-Being and Success in the Workplace

According to Wingfield and Wingfield (2014), employee well-being, sense of belonging, and organizational outcomes are all interrelated. This idea is supported by research conducted by May et al. (2004). They suggest that not only do relationships with colleagues and supervisors impact a sense of belonging and psychological safety in the workplace, but they also impact overall engagement and whether an employee sees their work as meaningful.

Winston and Creamer (1997) identified positive encounters with supervisors to be linked with job satisfaction, attaining personal professional goals as well as institutional successes. Conversely, student affairs professionals who do not have positive supervisory experiences often feel disconnected to the work, do not feel appreciated, nor do they report a

meaningful connection to the institution (Tull et al., 2015). Further, Barham and Winston (2006) established that poor supervision is one of the primary factors influencing staff attrition.

In their research on why new professionals leave the field of student affairs, Renn and Jessup-Anger (2008) highlight the importance of positive supervisory relationships, mentoring, professional development opportunities, and realistic job expectations. Expounding on this, Tull (2009) put forth that effective supervision, specifically a supervisor who can adequately provide a smooth entrance into the profession, is a significant factor influencing how new employees experience the field. Regarding the experiences of mid-level professionals, Rosser and Javinar (2003) identified similar themes including professional development opportunities, advancement, compensation, and positive supervisory experiences.

In summary, strong supervision is essential to job satisfaction, and job satisfaction is key to well-being and staff retention. The premise of this study echoes adjacent literature that supports the idea that employee well-being and success can and should be supported by well-prepared, identity-conscious supervisors (Shupp & Arminio, 2012).

Theoretical Framework

The key to holistic development of employees within student affairs, and a primary resource needed for them to reach their full potential, is positive supervision (Jenkins, 2015). As outlined previously, a central component of positive supervision is providing identity-conscious supervisory experiences wherein an understanding of an employee's social and cultural background is both seen and valued. Similarly, one's assessment of well-being is impacted by one's lived experiences, previous and current access to resources, and expectations for the future (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2008).

Taking into account each of these dynamics, the two conceptual frameworks that were used to provide a valuable lens through which to discuss (a) the thematic experiences of those who were first in their family to attend college, (b) employee subjective well-being, and (c) the influence that supervisors have on well-being and success in the workplace, are Yosso's Community Cultural Wealth Model (2005), and Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent et al., 1994).

Community Cultural Wealth

Research put forward by Allen et al. (2013) suggests that both social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) are integral to an individual's capacity to be successful in the job market. Lin (2001) describes social capital as the networks formed by friends and other group memberships or connections that facilitate access to resources. While first-generation students have a great deal of community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005), what they often lack are the social ties that transmit knowledge that is seen as valuable within the higher education systems that they are a part of. As a result, a fair amount has been written about how first-generation students have "inadequate college-related cultural capital" (Ward et al., 2012, p. 106). Cultural capital includes the understanding of education, style of speech and dress, and physical appearance (Bourdieu, 1986) that can be accessed in order to know how to "fit in" to social and professional contexts.

These constructs often reinforce the institutionalization of the dominant culture (Bourdieu, 1986), therefore, historically minoritized communities are assumed to be "deficient" and less likely to succeed (Yosso, 2005). Individuals with minoritized identities do possess cultural capital; it may just look and sound different from the dominant narrative. Yosso's

Community Cultural Wealth Model (2005) centers the knowledge and lived experiences of marginalized communities as valuable assets that can facilitate success.

Community Cultural Wealth includes aspirational, navigational, social, familial, linguistic, and resistance capitals. Using this asset-based framework provided a valuable lens through which to analyze forms of capital, and how those are leveraged to support well-being and success. These capitals also closely align with Seligman's (2018) and Helliwell et al.'s (2017) measures of well-being. Complementary to this, Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent et al., 1994) frames concepts related to career decision making, professional development, and success in-career.

Social Cognitive Career Theory

Social factors salient to first generation professionals, such as race, culture, and gender, have been researched from this perspective in relationship to determination of career goals and behavior (S. Brown & Lent, 2019). Social Cognitive Career Theory was developed by Lent et al. (1994) as an avenue toward recognizing the "dynamic processes and mechanisms through which career and academic interests develop; career-related choices are forged and enacted; and performance outcomes are achieved" (p. 80) across the lifespan.

With Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory as the foundation, Social Cognitive Career Theory centers three variables: self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and choice goals (Lent et al., 1994). This framework also incorporates how historical and contextual factors impact an individual, their sense of efficacy, and expectations related to the idea of choice, and considering the impact of those choices (Lent et al., 2000). Based on the literature, one might infer that first-generation professionals' self-efficacy and outcome expectations are influenced

by their lived experiences and perceptions of barriers. Furthermore, each of these variables are factors related to their assessment of subjective well-being, as was illustrated in the previous section.

In closing, Social Cognitive Career Theory was chosen as an informing framework because it takes into account the ways in which an individual's background and experiences influence how they enter into, experience, and persist in the workplace. It addresses how interests in particular careers are developed, what goals an individual might set for themselves, and success in the work domain (Lent et al., 2000). This is particularly salient to those who are first-gen. Objective variables, such as those identified earlier in this chapter (e.g., familial support and financial resources) as well as self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations are all recognized as factors that impact academic and career outcomes (Lent et al., 1994). Considering this in the analysis stage of this study provided some insight to participant responses.

From my observations and experiences, I would assert that the forms of community cultural wealth that Yosso's work highlights are forms of capital that are too often naturally invisible, made invisible, or wholly ignored in supervisory discussions. Seeing a supervisee's strengths, leveraging what they have learned from past experiences, and offering identity conscious and affirmative supervision supports well-being and success. Research put forward by Burkard et al. (2006) supports this implication of the ineffectiveness of culturally unresponsive supervision. This study also used the lens of community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) to make sense of how first-generation professionals responded to the prompt, "What is one thing you need from your supervisor to support your well-being and success?" This has

identified some of the ways in which supervisors within student affairs could potentially build upon the cultural capital of its first-generation employees.

Summary

This chapter has outlined the economic and cultural access; experiences of belonging, inclusion, and acculturation; role of family engagement and support; and effect of faculty interactions and mentoring on the experiences of those who were first in their family to attend college. The chapter then provided an overview of salient supervision models within student affairs as well as the important role supervisors' awareness of privilege and oppression plays in their capacity to effectively build relationships with and provide identity conscious supervision. The chapter went on to discuss well-being and expounded upon the dimensions that contribute to a higher sense of subjective well-being. Following this was an exploration of subjective well-being in the workplace and how supervisors contribute or detract from this, and thus impact institutional success as measured by employee retention, engagement, and productivity.

The chapter concluded by using the lens of Social Cognitive Career Theory and Community Cultural Wealth to align the discussion about the thematic experiences of those who were first in their family to attend college, employee subjective well-being, and the influence that supervisors have on well-being and success in the workplace. This study contributes to this body of knowledge by addressing the following research question: What do first-generation professionals need from their supervisors to support their well-being and success?

CHAPTER III: METHODS

This exploratory mixed-method study's primary purpose was to learn more about what first-generation professionals need from their supervisors to support their well-being and success within the field of higher education and student affairs. This study's purpose is pragmatic in nature; the reason for inquiry is to solve a problem in practice. Increasing an understanding of first-generation professionals' needs could positively contribute to supervisors becoming more effective in supporting their first-generation supervisees and their work in their student affairs contexts.

The research design was such that first-generation professionals had the opportunity to express their ideas about supervisory needs via brainstorming, indicating the importance of each of their needs, and then naming the themes that arose for them. Participants were empowered to indicate what is needed, how much they need it, and whether this need is being met. Neither a straightforward qualitative nor quantitative study would have accomplished this, particularly in aggregate across the participant data. Therefore, a mixed-method design was well-suited for this study, and concept mapping served as a suitable means for accomplishing this objective.

The remainder of this chapter includes a re-introduction of the research questions that framed this study, a rationale for a mixed-method research design, and an overview of pragmatism's epistemological and ontological perspective. Following this, I discuss concept mapping as the primary research method as well as a more detailed account of the study's research design. The chapter will close with a summary of ethical considerations associated with the study.

Research Questions

This study sought to identify what first-generation professionals need from their supervisors to support their well-being and success, how important each of the identified needs are, and to what extent these needs are being met. The focus prompt was: "As a first generation professional, what I need from my supervisor to support my well-being and success is _____." While the focus prompt asked for participants to identify one thing, they were able to share as many individual idea statements as they liked. Using this data as a foundation, the following research questions were answered:

1. What do first-gen professionals need from their supervisors to support their well-being and success?
2. Of the needs identified by first-generation professionals, how important is each one to first-generation professionals' well-being and success?
3. To what extent are supervisors meeting the identified needs of first-generation professionals?

Design Rationale

A mixed-method design was necessary for this study as the research questions could not be answered solely from either a quantitative or a qualitative method. Concept mapping provides for a participatory process with identified stakeholder populations from idea generation through the interpretation of the data. This level of stakeholder participation is vital to the validity of data collected and its interpretation (Stoyanov et al., 2017). By utilizing a mixed-methods approach to gather ideas and perspectives across a diversity of participants, concept mapping provides a depth not possible with a simple survey.

The uniqueness of concept mapping is that it offers the benefit of participants sharing their own narrative via the qualitative phase of the research design in combination with quantitative and qualitative analytic techniques in the second phases. More specifically, the method's statistical techniques provide a way of structuring the idea statements gathered from participants, and then returning to them again to learn how they make sense of the concepts, see association between them, and perceive their relative importance.

The mixed method format of concept mapping was particularly advantageous in this study because it provided an equitable structure for all participants (first-generation professionals) to produce qualitative data (what they need from their supervisor) as well as provided voice in establishing the quantitative data (importance of need, and to what extent the need has been met). Similarly, there was a qualitative component to how participants made sense of the brainstorming data (sorting and labeling) that was then generalized across participants via quantitative multi-dimensional scaling.

Additional strengths of concept mapping are its narrative and graphical options for data reporting. Presenting data analyses in the form of diagrams and graphs may create a platform for understanding research results that, in my experience, are more accessible to the average person. As a pragmatist, the useability of research results is core to my purpose in conducting it.

Epistemological Perspective: Pragmatism

This study is conceptualized from the pragmatic perspective that supervisors within higher education would do well to have some practical guidance in supporting the well-being and success of the first-generation professionals they supervise. The underpinning assumptions

that characterize pragmatism may be described as a perspective that establishes “knowing” as a social and situated feat that both shapes and is shaped by knowers’ lived experience (Talisse & Aikin, 2008). Epistemologically, pragmatism is of the idea that research inquiry should seek to focus on sense-making and seeking to resolve real world issues (Patton, 2005).

Classical pragmatism can be traced to intellectual movements that were emerging globally in the mid-nineteenth century (Bernstein, 2010). There are four generally recognized contributors: John Dewey, William James, George Herbert Mead, and Charles Sanders Peirce (Bernstein, 1972). While the differences between them are considerable, what they have in common is placing purposeful human activity at the heart of philosophy and science. Powell (2001) articulates this well, summarizing that pragmatists operate with the primary purpose of facilitating human problem-solving. While there was a decline in pragmatism’s influence after World War II, there was a resurgence in the 1980s and 1990s (Bernstein, 2010).

Modern pragmatic inquiry is founded on the view that research should produce actionable knowledge. As noted previously, classical pragmatism originally focused research inquiry on issues significant to humanity rather than the nature of truth and reality (Patton, 2005). Pragmatist scholars have put forth that understandings of the proverbial “truth” can only be found through the human experience (Morgan, 2014; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2008). As such, one might say that inquiry itself is an experiential process.

Another principle that is core to pragmatic inquiry is the belief in the interconnectedness between experience, knowing, and acting in the research process. Pragmatist philosophy is connected to the idea that past experiences, environmental context, and human actions are all interconnected, therefore knowledge is socially constructed

(Yefimov, 2004). Further, Morgan (2014) posits that actions and context are also interdependent and together create consequence. Therefore, if an action, or the context that it takes place in, changes, the impact would also change.

There is consensus amongst pragmatists that all knowledge is socially constructed. That said, individual experiences do not always reflect the generalized social constructs (Morgan 2014). This is particularly salient in considering the differing experiences of those who hold dominant or subordinated social identities. By centering actionable knowledge as the impetus for this study, I sought to position this project to build on the foundation of first-gen professionals (participant) lived experiences and ways of knowing, hence, closely aligning the research implications to be of practical relevance and utilization.

In summary, solving real-world problems is the grounding research paradigm of pragmatism. Pragmatism is based on the belief that inquiry and knowledge are inextricably connected: knowing is based on experience, and social experiences influence one's perceptions of the world. Essentially, epistemology and ontology cannot be distinct philosophical categories (Talisse & Aikin, 2008).

This study's pragmatic purpose was to give voice to first-generation professionals and offer guidance to their supervisors. Supervision literature has clearly demonstrated that supervisors generally receive very little training (Shupp & Arminio, 2012). Further, Brown et al. (2019) noted that there is a lack of resources that specifically account for the supervisory needs of those who hold minoritized identities, including those who were the first in their families to attend college. I have not identified any existing studies that have offered first-generation

professionals a voice in stating their needs, how important those needs are to them, or whether they believe those needs are being met.

This pragmatic study was leveraged as a means to generate ideas about awareness-raising, training, and supervisors' professional development. The final phase of concept mapping provides a diagram, termed a Go-Zone Graph, that can be used, in this case, to assist in identifying what activities or resources have been identified in supporting first-generation professionals and to what extent they are present. As such, the mixed methodology of concept mapping served the pragmatic approach to inquiry that was required of this study.

Concept Mapping as Methodology

Concept mapping (Kane & Trochim, 2007) uses a participatory mixed method approach to inquiry. Dr. William Trochim and colleagues published a series of papers in the mid-1980s on concept mapping in a special issue of Evaluation and Program Planning (Trochim, 1989). In this seminal work, concept mapping's theoretical and practical features are outlined, making a case for its utility in planning, evaluation, and research.

Concept mapping is a research methodology that has generally been used in the social sciences to involve stakeholder participants in structured dialogue in order to collect different perspectives on a specific topic (Kane & Trochim, 2007). This innovative research method has been used by groups and organizations in several different ways (Trochim & Kane, 2005). The visual representations of the collected data can be used to organize, synthesize, and document ideas in research and teaching (Butler-Kisber & Poldma, 2010). The concept mapping process

generally follows six phases: (a) Preparation, (b) Idea Generation, (c) Idea Structuring, (d) Analysis, (e) Interpretation, and (f) Utilization (Kane & Trochim, 2007).

Phases of Concept Mapping

In the preparation step, the researcher collaborates with stakeholder participants to define the project's focus and what group(s) of people is positioned to share the best and most diverse thinking on the topic. A timeline for the project and an outreach strategy for engaging stakeholders in the process is created. The information the researcher seeks to learn from a group of participants or stakeholders is framed in the form of sentence completion or a specific question.

The second stage is for participants to generate ideas related to the focus prompt. The generation of ideas is accomplished through brainstorming, either live or online (Jackson & Trochim, 2002). For the purposes of the implementation of this research project, an online platform was used to collect data through all phases of the project. Participants generated ideas individually and submitted them anonymously.

In collaboration with a review team of stakeholder participants, the researcher then reduces the amount of data by eliminating duplicate ideas and combining highly similar contributions. This facilitates making the amount of information that the wider participant pool will need to navigate in next steps more manageable and makes the data more concise.

A concept map's core data come from the organization phase via unstructured or free sort (Coxon, 1999). Each participant sorts the generated statements (qualitative data) into categories that make sense to them. Participants can create the number of groupings they think are necessary to arrange the statements according to similar themes and concepts. The final

and separate step in this phase is for participants to rate (quantitative data) each statement in a grouping. Using a Likert scale, participants rate each idea statement in terms of level of importance and the extent to which the need or idea is currently being met.

To begin the analysis phase, the participants' structuring work is aggregated to create the concept map using the data in a multivariate analysis. The completed sorting process from each of the participants is then transferred to a 0/1 co-occurrence matrix that represents as many columns and rows as are represented in the idea statements (Coxon, 1999). If the ideas were not grouped together, then a 0 is entered, if they were grouped together, then a 1 is entered. A similarity matrix is then created by compiling all of the matrixes, which illustrates how often ideas were sorted together across all participants. The multi-dimensional scaling analysis is then built from this summed square similarity matrix.

The multi-dimensional scaling analysis represents the similar and dissimilar statement idea data as distances in Euclidean space (Davison, 1983). This is how the point map is created, which is a visual representation of where the ideas lie in relation to one another. Practically speaking, the closer together the points on the map, the more frequently the statements were sorted together. Statement ideas that were not frequently grouped together will be positioned farther from each other. The researcher enters the interpretation phase as they examine how participants grouped associated ideas together, which create "clusters" on the point map.

Concept clusters are a visual representation of how participants think about the ideas thematically (Rosas & Kane, 2012). As a representation of these themes, or how each participant saw the connection between ideas, they are able to name each of their idea statement groupings. Along with a careful review of the idea statements included in each of the

groupings, these labels assist the researcher in creating final descriptors of each of the themed clusters.

After the cluster map is established, the data reflecting participant value ratings of each statement can be overlaid. The averaged ratings for all participants and any subgroups can be used to identify meaningful patterns. Pattern matches can be conducted to create a visual representation of similarities or differences in how clusters were rated in aggregate across participants. This bivariate comparison of the average cluster ratings is illustrated as a ladder graph (Trochim, 1985).

Ladder graphs are created by positioning the x/y axis vertically, with individual lines connecting each averaged cluster rating. The higher the connecting point on the vertical line, the higher the cluster was rated. For example, in this study, one could take the theme of Humility and compare how people of differing races rated its level of importance, or to what extent each race reported that need being met. Again, in the case of this study, this capability enables more concise reporting, as first-generation professionals are not a monolithic group.

Concept maps and associated analyses can be used in many ways in the utilization phase. Using the example above, supervisors could target their offerings centered on humility to specific populations that placed a high value on humility. Concept maps also have the capability of producing what is called a “Go-Zone Graph,” which is a bivariate plot representing two patterns of ratings of individual idea statements (Rosas & Kane, 2012). The bivariate space is divided into quadrants based on the average x and y values (Kane & Trochim, 2007). Again, using the example above, one could compare how important participants rated humility with how they rated the extent to which humility has been provided (or the need is being met).

In this study, the four quadrants of a Go Zone Graph indicate how an idea statement was simultaneously rated either (a) above the mean in importance and extent met; (b) above the mean in importance but below the mean of extent met; (c) below the mean in terms of importance and extent met; or (d) below the mean in importance but above the mean for extent met.

Research Design and Methods

The following section provides an overview of the research methods that were utilized for this study. The section includes details regarding the platform for data collection, methods for participant selection, data collection, and data analysis. It concludes with considerations for using the theoretical frameworks of Community Cultural Wealth and Social Cognitive Career Theory for analysis of the concept maps.

Platform for Data Collection

Concept Systems, Inc. groupwisdom, a secure, confidential web-based software platform, was utilized to conduct the concept mapping design that was used in this dissertation study. As previously outlined, this participatory mixed method design was selected because it provided participants an equal voice through both the qualitative and quantitative phases of the research. One of the primary benefits of this platform was that participants, no matter where they were physically participating or how many people were submitting their thoughts at the same time, could see all of the ideas as they were generated. Similarly, the platform allowed each individual to take part in the sorting and rating activity at whatever time and pace was best for them. In short, this web-based platform was created specifically for the purpose of concept mapping and provided a seamless means for collecting and analyzing data.

Phase 1: Project Planning

The initial stage of this concept mapping study was to carefully consider how the study would be completed. This included identifying who possible stakeholders were, which was conducted via a literature review that was put forward in Chapter II. Next steps consisted of deciding how stakeholders would be reached, and how a sub-set of stakeholders would be engaged in the data analysis phases.

The outreach strategy for engaging first-generation professionals in this study was multi-spoked. Currently, there are no known colleges or universities that systematically collect information related to staff or first-generation faculty status in any of their institutional reports. For this reason, it was not possible to use pre-existing lists or systems to recruit only those employees who identify as first-gen; consequently, a link to the study was shared broadly.

Approaches to outreach included higher education social media posts and some amount of snowball participation. Additional recruitment efforts included emails via list serves, word of mouth, electronic newsletters, bulletin boards, social media, and targeted Facebook group pages. After the Antioch University IRB was approved, data collection began.

Aligned with the spirit of participatory research, a participant review committee was then assembled. The primary charge of this group was to assist me in navigating meaning making of the information the study generated. This four-person review committee consisted of a diverse cross-section of first-generation professionals at varying stages of their careers.

Phase 2: Idea Generation

The focus prompt was: “As a first-generation professional, what I need from my supervisor to support my well-being and success is_____.” This was discussed with the

dissertation committee and participant review committee prior to finalization. While the focus prompt asked for participants to identify one thing, they were empowered to share as many individual idea statements as they liked.

A website link specific to this study was created (www.firstgengradstudy.com) wherein a landing page allowed potential participants to review a description of the study. Additional content included contact information and IRB approval. The landing page directed potential participants to the Concept Systems, Inc. link that was specific to this study.

Online consent to participate was required of all participants prior to entering any data. This also required them to affirm that they met criteria for participation; namely that they identified as a first-generation professional working in a non-clinical role in higher education, were living and working in the United States, and were over the age of 18. Once this had been completed, participants were invited to disclose demographic information that included number of years in the field, organizational status, organizational size, race, and gender identity.

This phase of data collection engaged participants in the idea generation process. In terms of simplicity of use, some participants may liken this to a shared google document in that the web-based platform enabled brainstorming ideas to be shared and visible in real-time. Participants anonymously submitted as many brainstormed idea statements as they wanted. It is important to note that demographic information cannot be ascribed to any of the brainstormed ideas in this phase but did provide a collective snapshot of participant characteristics.

In order to reduce the idea statement data to one unduplicated list, a careful data reduction process took place after the window for idea generation closed. The process took place with a subset of the participant stakeholder review committee. The committee sub-set individually reviewed the data and brought forward their thoughts on which idea statements were duplicated or represented highly similar concepts. They then came together to compare thoughts and engaged in formally reducing the data; they were asked to put forward a maximum of one hundred idea statements.

Phase 3: Structure Ideas (Sorting and Rating)

The third phase of concept mapping offered participants an opportunity to form some structure to the idea statements that were generated in Phase 2; this took place through a sorting and rating process. This required a second wave of outreach and engagement inviting first-generation professionals to participate in this phase of the study. Online consent and eligibility to participate was again required of everyone in order to participate. Once again, participants were asked to complete demographic questions. In this phase, the demographic information can be connected to the data that each participant provided, while participant identity remains anonymous.

Online, with essential guidance reminding participants about the purpose of learning more about what first-generation professionals need from their supervisors, participants were invited to individually sort the idea statements into thematic groupings. The software provides a simple and organized way to do this in that it is designed such that these groupings are made to look like piles, similar to how cards are arranged while playing solitaire.

The second step of this phase involved participants using a Likert-scale to rate each idea statement based on importance of, and the extent to which, the idea or concept is currently being met for them. Using this lead-in statement, “Professionals who were first-generation college students have indicated that the following concepts are needed from their supervisors to support their well-being and success. As a first-generation professional, please rate each statement”. Each idea was rated using the following questions and scales:

1. How important is this idea for my well-being and success?

   1 = Not important to me at all; 2 = Relatively unimportant to me; 3 = Neutral;

   4 = Important to me; 5 = Very important to me

2. To what extent has a supervisor previously or currently met this need for me?

   1 = Not met at all; 2 = Minimally met; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Adequately met;

   5 = Completely met

Because the sorting and rating process can be somewhat time-intensive, fewer people fully completed this phase of data collection. For this reason, this stage was closed as soon as 50 participants completed both steps.

Phase 4: Analysis and Creation of Maps

As discussed previously, analysis in concept mapping is done primarily via multi-dimensional scaling, which can produce graphical illustrations of the data. By aggregating all individual data, this multivariate statistical technique created a conceptual point map providing a visual representation of how participants made meaning of and viewed the similarities and differences between concepts. Practically speaking, the closer together the points on the map, the more frequently the idea statements were sorted together. The ideas

that were not frequently sorted together were positioned farther from one another. For example, ideas like mentoring and coaching were plotted nearer one another vs. funding for professional development.

A hierarchical cluster analysis was then conducted by using the multi-dimensional scaling results to assist in further categorizing the point map idea statements. The software uses Ward's method for agglomeration (Trochim, 1989) to create these thematic clusters of conceptually similar ideas. A bridging value indicates how strongly each statement on the map is related to the statements around it. Bridging values can range from 0.0 to 1.0. Lower bridging values are considered "anchors" because they often reflect the core idea or theme of a cluster (Kane & Trochim, 2007).

Phase 5: Interpret Maps

Preliminary results from the map analyses were shared with the participant review committee who provided their thoughts, feedback, and other input into the interpretation of the data. Within this phase, the participant review committee worked with me to determine that the best fitting cluster map solution to represent the ideas gathered. The number of clusters that comprise a map is somewhat subjective; there is no known mathematical solution that determines this (Kane & Rosas, 2018). For this reason, the number of clusters represented in this study, and the final label on each cluster, were predicated on how I (as the researcher), and the stakeholder participant committee made sense of the represented data analyses.

After a final cluster map was agreed upon, several correlational analyses were conducted from the rating scale data. The rating results were illustrated in varying configurations and graphs that the groupwisdom software can produce. Next, pattern matches

were conducted to compare ratings between demographic groupings of participants. As an example, it was possible to differentiate as a demographic how early-career professionals vs. more seasoned professionals rated the extent to which their identified needs were being met across each cluster.

Phase 6: Utilization of Maps

The last phase of concept mapping is determining how (or if) the data can be useful to stakeholders. In this study, by using the Go Zone Graphs, it is possible to determine a number of different insights and actionable ideas. For example, the Go Zone Graph can illustrate what supervisory activities or resources have been identified as most important in supporting first-generation professionals, and to what extent they are present, i.e., Illustrations of what is needed, but not being offered were apparent. Similarly, illustrations of what is being offered, but not necessarily identified as important were apparent as well.

The intent of this study was to increase understanding of what professionals who were first-generation college students need from their supervisors. This information can be used to guide supervisors in supporting this population, as well as offer a road map to first-gen professionals in asking for what they need to ensure their well-being and success.

Ethical Considerations

It was imperative that potential participants have access to informational material about the study, how it would be conducted, who would have access to the raw data, and how the data would be used. To this end, I shared my Antioch email address along with all outreach materials and offered an opportunity to talk by phone to discuss the study and answer any questions that participants may have had. As previously noted, a digital consent to participate

was administered via the study platform both at the beginning of the anonymous idea generation (brainstorming) phase of the study, and again when the platform opened for sorting and rating.

Through each phase of the project, I sought to minimize the risk of any negative impact that participants might experience due to their participation. As such, maintaining the confidentiality of participant identities and data collected was of the utmost importance. At no point were participants asked to disclose identifying information such as their name, institution where they work, or their supervisor's name.

The Concept Systems groupwisdom software is highly secure and requires a password for access. Only I, as the researcher, had full access to the raw data. Data processed with the participant review committee was conducted live via Zoom without the possibility of download or sharing. Ancillary data that I as the researcher, members of the participant review committee, and members of the dissertation committee, might request were stored on password protected computers.

Summary

In this chapter, I re-introduced the research questions that framed this study, offered a rationale for a mixed method concept mapping research design, and provided an overview of pragmatism's epistemological and ontological perspective. Following this, I discussed concept mapping as methodology, and presented each component of the corresponding research design and methods. I also discussed the ethical considerations that were taken into account. In Chapter IV, I will present the findings of the study.

CHAPTER IV: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings of the study that was completed for this dissertation. The findings from this study address what first-generation professionals report needing from their supervisors to support their well-being and success, how important each of the identified needs are, and to what extent these needs are being met. The concept mapping analysis and results were conducted using the Concept Systems, Inc. groupwisdom application (Build 2021.24.01, 2022).

The data collected were specifically from the perspective of first-generation professionals themselves. This chapter is organized in parallel with the concept mapping process phases: Preparation, Idea Generation, Idea Structuring, and Analysis (Kane & Trochim, 2007). The final phase in concept mapping, Utilization, provides a foundation for the implications for practice and recommendations that can be found in Chapter V.

Preparation

As explained in Chapter III, I decided very early in the conceptualization of the study that data would be collected via the Concept Systems groupwisdom software. To create a user-friendly entry to the platform portal, I created a website, www.firstgengradstudy.com, that served as a landing page. The website included general information about the study, participant requirements, and contact information for study-related questions. Those who were interested were then able to click on a “participate” button that redirected them to the portal where they were able to electronically accept or decline the conditions of the informed consent, and then participate anonymously.

Via an invitation email sent to doctoral colleagues and other professional networks as well as posts on a wide range of higher education-focused social media sites, I recruited first-generation professionals who met the following criteria:

- Identify as a first-generation college graduate, defined for the purposes of this study as an individual who completed at least a bachelor's degree, but whose parents or guardians did not attend and/or did not complete a four-year bachelor's degree
- Identify as a professional currently working in a non-clinical role in higher education
- Are currently working and living in the United States
- Are over age 18

There were two phases of participant recruitment: the first for Idea Generation and the second for Idea Structuring. The website landing page and Concept Systems groupwisdom platform were used in all phases of the study.

Idea Generation

Participant recruitment for Idea Generation was open for two weeks. During this time, a total of 84 individuals accepted the informed consent. The number of participants who completed the demographic questions and contributed at least one idea was 73. While the demographic information cannot be ascribed to any of the brainstormed ideas in this phase, it does offer a collective snapshot of participant characteristics in terms of race/ethnicity, gender identity, current professional level, highest degree earned, and current institutional size.

Participation in this phase was relatively diverse in terms of race and ethnicity with people of color representing 52% of idea contributors. A fair number of participants, 10.96%, disclosed identifying with a non-binary gender. Early-career professionals were most highly

represented at 47.95%, with mid-level professionals close behind at 38.88%. Most participants, 76.71%, reported that they had completed a master's degree. The institutional size that participants are currently associated with was nearly evenly represented.

Using the web-based platform, participants generated ideas responding to the focus prompt, "As a first-generation professional, what I need from my supervisor to support my well-being and success is..." Participants were able to anonymously submit as many brainstormed idea statements as they wanted. There were 136 separate idea entries submitted by study participants, and these can be found in Appendix A.

According to Kane and Trochim (2007), the final number of statements that should move forward to the Idea Structuring phases should not exceed 100 to 125. This avoids overwhelming those who will be sorting and rating the statements. Idea synthesis enables the list to be edited through a highly structured process that maintains the integrity of the original ideas submitted.

The idea synthesis process that I undertook started by putting all idea statements, as submitted, into a spreadsheet. I then assigned each a number. From there, I reviewed each entry looking for any that included more than one idea. I separated those into individual idea statements using the original idea number followed by a letter. If the original statement included four individual ideas, those ideas became #A, #B, #C, and #D. As an example, one participant had submitted, as a single entry, "I need help adjusting to middle class life as well as my specific role." This was then broken into two idea statements: A) help adjusting to middle class life and B) help adjusting to my specific role. A sub-set of the participant review committee validated the edits that were made.

I then evaluated each idea for relevance to the study. In consultation with the participant committee sub-set, three statements were removed. The first was “allow for cross-departmental collaboration,” which seemed out of context. The second was “Stop acting like a master’s degree makes you better than me because I only hold a bachelor’s degree.” The third was “Understanding why we advocate for student staff to be paid more because those who are less affluent and less supported through college miss out on valuable leadership opportunities because of money.” The rationale for these removals was that while both provide important context to how a participant might be feeling or offer insight to why a participant might take specific actions in their role, neither specifically spoke to what their supervisor could contribute to their experience.

The next step in the idea synthesis was to look for duplicate statements or highly similar ideas. Unique ideas remained in a stand-alone group. Statements that were conceptually similar were grouped together. Using my notes on the overarching concept that had been communicated in each grouping, I then drafted one statement that was representative of the grouped statements. These consolidated statements were reviewed by the participant review committee sub-set as well. There were several points of discussion on whether the “spirit of a statement” was similar or dissimilar prior to the statement set being validated.

At the completion of this idea synthesis process, there were 77 individual idea statements. These can be found in Appendix B. I then uploaded these statements into the Concept Systems platform. I adjusted the settings for Idea Structuring to randomize the statement set for each participant. In the case of participants not completing a full sorting or rating activity, it would be less likely that the same statement was repeatedly not included.

Idea Structuring

In this study, Ideas Structuring consisted of three activities. For the first, participants sorted the idea statements by grouping them together in a way that conceptually made sense to them, and then labeled each grouping. In the second activity, participants used a Likert-scale to rate how important each individual idea was to them. The last rating activity asked participants to use a Likert-scale to indicate the extent to which the idea or concept is currently being met for them.

A second wave of outreach and engagement inviting first-generation professionals to participate in this phase of the study was conducted. While some participants may have participated in the idea generation phase, it was not a requirement to participate in idea structuring. Essentially, participants in this phase likely included a combination of returning participants as well as new participants. There is no way to know the break-down, as participation was anonymous.

Participant recruitment for the Idea Structuring phase was open for five weeks. The methods for recruitment included an email being sent to doctoral colleagues and other professional networks as well as posts on a wide range of higher education focused social media sites. Similar to the participation rates seen in idea generation, 48% of participants identified as non-white, and 38% identified as mid-level professionals. Participation in this phase, however, was overwhelmingly woman-identified at 67%.

A total of 106 individuals completed the informed consent and 91 began either the sorting or rating activities. For an individual's sorting data to be included in data analysis, they needed to have sorted at least 75% of the statements. Thirty-five participants completed this

successfully; of those, three needed to be removed due to not following instructions. Sorting data from 32 individuals was included in the final data analysis. There were 37 participants who completed the first rating activity and 25 completed the second. According to Rosas and Kane (2012), it is not unusual to see this drop-off of completions between the two rating activities as a part of web-based data collection. They indicate that this can be attributed to time investment or participant fatigue.

Analysis

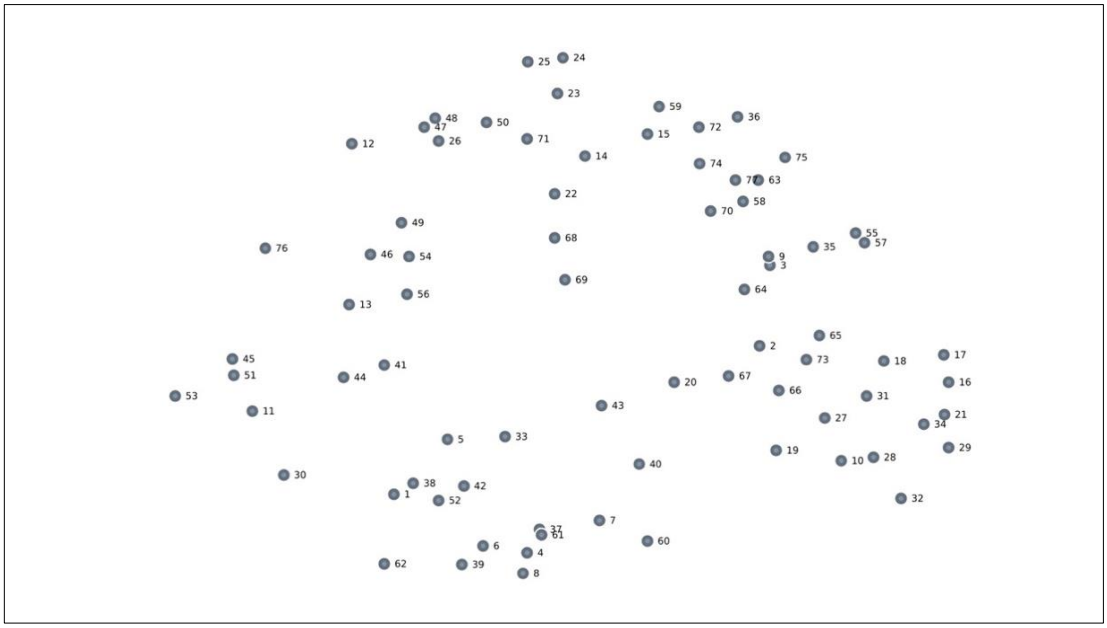
As noted in Chapter III, analysis in concept mapping is done primarily via multi-dimensional scaling (MDS). Using the groupwisdom platform, all the individual data were aggregated to create a conceptual point map. This provides a visual representation of how participants made meaning of and viewed the similarities and differences between concepts. Simply put, ideas that were sorted together frequently are plotted close together on the map. Those not sorted together frequently are plotted farther form one another. MDS produces a stress value that indicates the stability, or goodness of fit, of the data on the point map. The stress value for this study is within the prescribed range at .2768. The average stress value in concept mapping is .28 (Rosas & Kane, 2012).

Point Map

Each point on the map represents an individual statement. The numbers shown in Figure 4.1, the point map below, correspond to the statement list in Appendix B.

Figure 4.1

Point Map Representation of Statements and Statement Numbers



Idea statements that are closer together on the map were sorted together most frequently by participants. Statements that are farther apart were not sorted together as frequently, also indicating that the ideas were distinct from one another, or dissimilar. As an example, ideas statement 55 (genuine care and patience) and 57 (support for personal goals) are very close together indicating that participants saw these ideas as thematically similar, and the ideas were often sorted together. In contrast, ideas statement 24 (understanding of how I navigate the world as a person of color) and 32 (honest constructive feedback) are plotted far from one another, indicating that participants did not see those ideas as thematically similar, and the ideas were not often sorted together.

Cluster Map

Using the data from the point map, the Concept Systems, Inc. software was able to conduct a hierarchical cluster analysis using Ward's algorithm to create clusters, as outlined in Chapter III's methods section. The hierarchical cluster analysis report provides a visual representation of how the ideas are organized into groups and can be reviewed in relationship to one another. According to Rosas and Kane (2012), there is no ideal number of clusters in a concept mapping study, nor is there a mathematical way to determine the best fit. For this study, I took a multi-step approach to determine the final number of clusters for analysis.

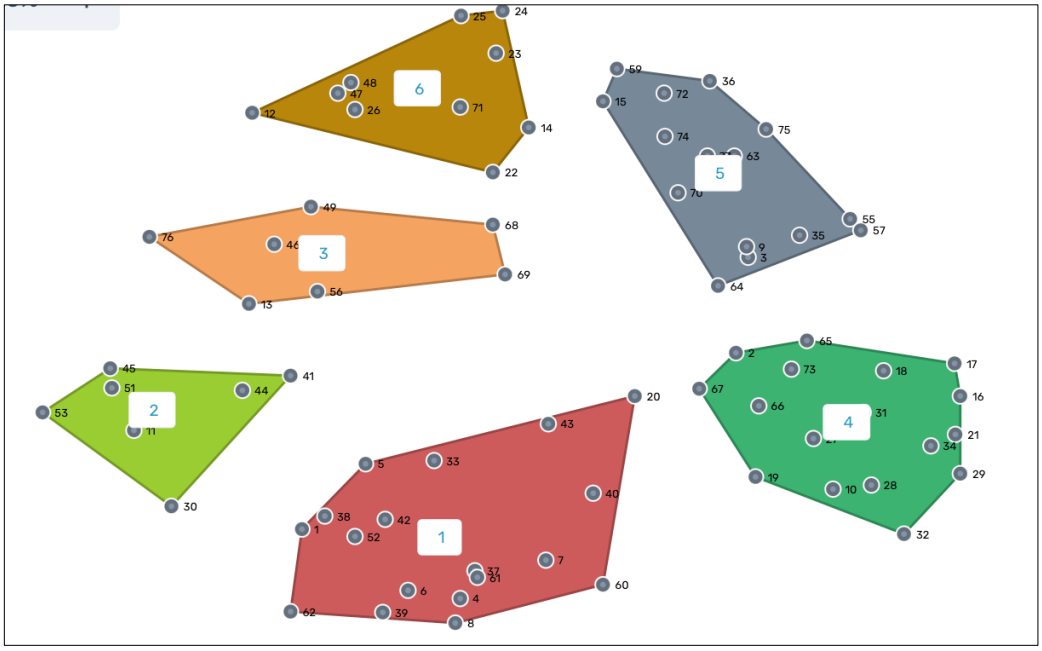
The first step I took was to review the statistical analysis starting with nine clusters down to three. Meaning, I reviewed possible cluster solutions that limited the included statements into clusters with very narrow idea inclusion to a very broad solution that grouped all ideas into just three clusters. With this, I paid close attention to how the different cluster ideas collapsed together as I ran the solutions into larger numbers of cluster groups and analyzed whether the newly formed groupings made sense. Using this qualitative approach (Jackson & Trochim, 2002), I determined that a solution of 5, 6, or 7 clusters enabled distinct thematic idea groupings. To further examine which solution groupings would be ideal, I engaged the participant review committee for the second step.

The participant review committee came together via a two-hour Zoom session to review the cluster map via the "share screen" function, discuss possible cluster solutions, and review the labels naming each cluster. Very quickly, the committee narrowed the options to the 5 or 6 cluster solution. There was some debate related to the differences, specifically in the five cluster and six cluster scenarios. As shown below in Figure 4.2, the six-cluster scenario

maintains thematic distinction between statements included in the lime green and orange clusters.

Figure 4.2

Six Cluster Scenario of Statements and Statement Numbers



Ideas represented in Figure 4.2's lime green (2) and orange (3) clusters were discussed as being very centered around having the information and modeling needed to be successful. Statements represented in the six-cluster solution are:

Cluster 2 (Lime Green) Statement Numbers and Ideas:

- 11 - help adjusting to my specific role
- 30 - detailed onboarding/information related to new tasks
- 41 - share guidance from their own professional experience
- 44 - reference materials and openness to processing how to address situations
- 45 - role model what a professional does
- 51 - share institutional knowledge/information
- 53 - guidance for navigating university politics and norms

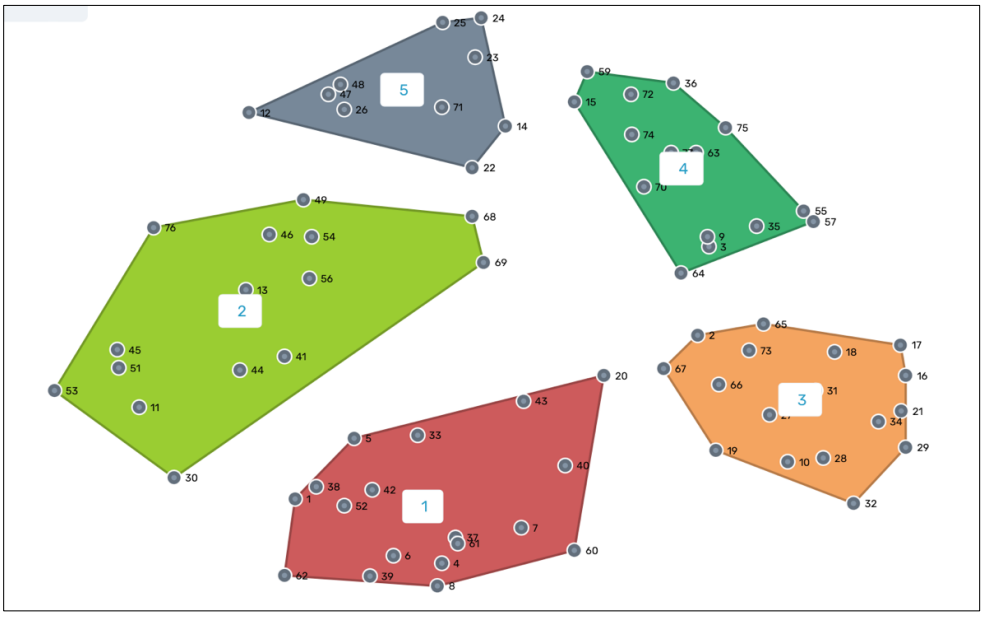
Cluster 3 (Orange) Statement Numbers and Ideas:

13 - grace and understanding in dealing with unspoken higher ed rules
46 - patience and understanding with questions
49 - encouragement and affirmations to work through self-doubt and imposter syndrome
54 - understand I want to take initiative, but am often doing so without a roadmap
56 - guidance on navigating workplace related burnout, boundaries, imposter syndrome, etc.
68 - value and respect the additional work I do in mentoring other first-gens
69 - recognize the unique skill set I bring to the department and compensate me for it
76 - model work life balance

The dialogue centered on whether the kinds of information represented in the clusters should be considered together or separately as would be the scenario with a five-cluster solution as represented in Figure 4.3, where the two are collapsed into one (represented in lime green). The case was made that the statements in cluster 2 were more concrete and related to job-task and orientation while those in cluster 3 were more conceptual in nature.

Figure 4.3

Five Cluster Scenario



The discussion was very thoughtful and reflective, as an added layer to the exchange about cluster 3 was that the review committee voiced a collective resonance with the statements. They indicated that they saw them to be centered on seeking information that felt "out of grasp" or "not available" to them as first-gen professionals either currently or in the past. For the reasons outlined in the discussion, in collaboration with the participant review committee, I settled on the six-cluster solution that is illustrated in Figure 4.2.

Bridging Analysis

The software was able to compute a "bridging value" for each statement in all the clusters. A bridging value indicates how strongly each statement on the map is related to the statements around it. Bridging values can range from 0.0 to 1.0. Lower bridging values are considered "anchors" because they often reflect the core idea or theme of a cluster (Kane & Trochim, 2007). Higher values are bridges, meaning they may connect or relate to ideas that are present in other nearby clusters. This is also visually represented in that some points on the map may be closer to other points that are outside of their cluster. The average bridging value for each cluster was:

Cluster 1 - .23
Cluster 2 - .78
Cluster 3 - .51
Cluster 4 - .26
Cluster 5 - .14
Cluster 6 - .23

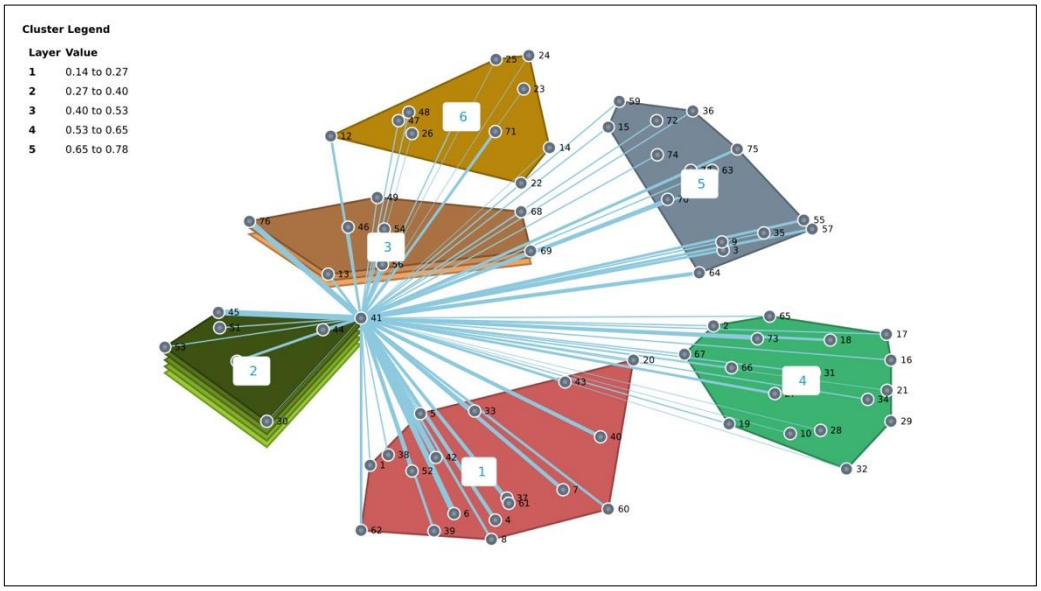
The bridging analysis demonstrates that four out of the six clusters have a bridging value under .50, with cluster 3 just on the cusp at .51. These values indicate that there is a high level of relationship amongst idea statements included in each cluster. The highest bridging value reflected is with cluster 2 at .78. This was also one of the contested clusters in determining the

cluster solution. As was reflected by the debate amongst the participant review committee, it is possible that these conceptual statements were seen as inter-related to other idea statements; therefore, were sorted broadly across the other statements on the map.

To investigate this further, I used the platform's "spanning analysis" function, which shows how frequently a statement on the map has been sorted with every other statement (Kane & Trochim, 2007). An example of this broad sorting from cluster 2 can be found in statement 41, "share guidance from their own professional experience." This statement was sorted with every other statement on the map at least once, except for with statement 29, "concrete answers." A visual representation of the spanning analysis can be found below in Figure 4.4. Note that in this illustration, statement 41 is the hub. The thickness of the lines connecting it to other statements is indicative of the number of times the statements were sorted together.

Figure 4.4

Spanning Analysis



Overarchingly, the bridging values and analysis validate that this iteration of the cluster map provides a meaningful way of making sense of and organizing the ideas that were generated by first-gen professionals. This cluster with the higher bridging value, as noted, contains statements that were conceptually linked with other clusters on the map during the participant sorting process.

Cluster Labels

After completing the exercise to finalize the cluster map, I engaged the participant review committee in a second endeavor to name or label each of the clusters on the map. The final labels for each of the clusters on the map were derived from both quantitative and qualitative influence. This process was accomplished by first sharing with the group the labels that were provided by the participants who completed the sorting activity. Secondarily, we reviewed the bridging value of the individual statements within each cluster. We denoted the key words in the statement with the lowest bridging value in each cluster since they serve as an "anchor" of the cluster ideas. Lastly, there was spirited conversation about whether the labels that had been generated by the platform were conceptually congruent and thematically representative of the statements in each cluster.

The cluster that commanded a significant amount of conversation and debate was cluster 6. The groupwisdom platform had produced the label "Cultural Competence," which several members of the review committee had reservations about. The primary arguments were two-fold. First, some in the group felt that "competence" implies that there is a proverbial finish line to learning about cultural considerations and that participants were asking for more

than “knowledge of.” The second was the cluster ideas that spanned racial/ethnic considerations as well as those related to socioeconomic status and imposter syndrome. Statements in cluster 6 include:

12 - help navigating middle class life and resources
14 - space to be myself without having to assimilate to be seen as professional
22 - a team environment that values MY background and experiences
23 - cultural understanding
24 - understanding of how I navigate the world as a person of color
25 - an approach that is relevant to me as a person of color
26 - acknowledgement that racism exists in our department/college
47 - understanding that imposter syndrome doesn't go away
48 - understanding of imposter syndrome
50 - understanding of how imposter syndrome impacts me in the workplace
71 - understand that I did not have the opportunity to do low paid internships or conferences because I could not afford to not work

The label that was eventually settled on was “Cultural Intelligence” due to its association with connecting knowledge, awareness and behaviors; more on this will be explored in Chapter V.

Figure 4.5

Labeled Cluster Map

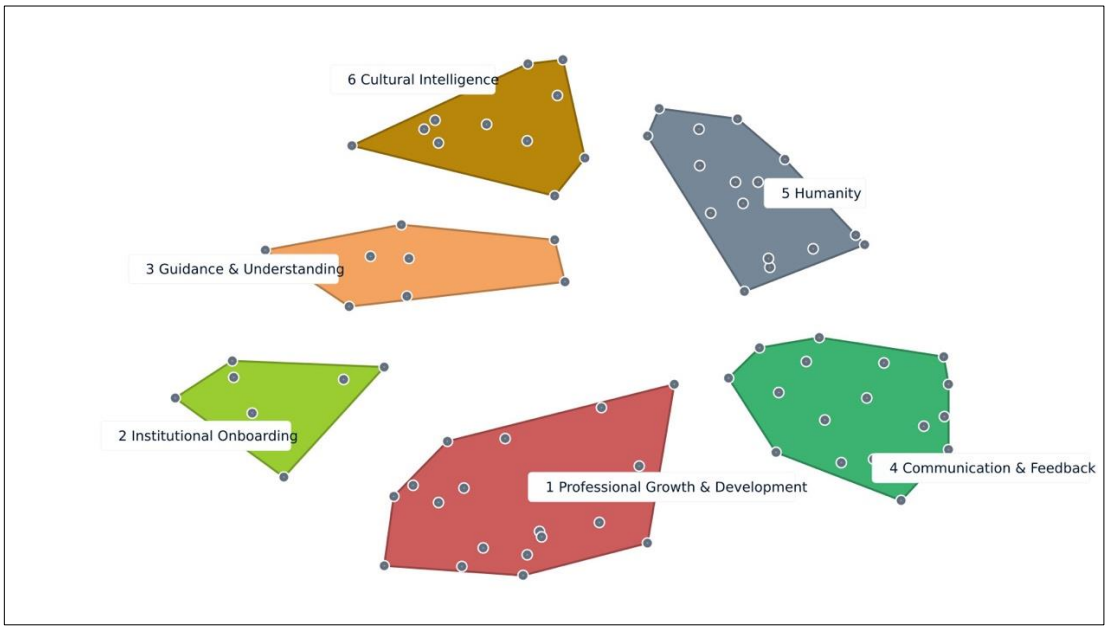


Figure 4.5 provides an illustration of the cluster map that includes the final assigned labels that were generated in collaboration with the participant review committee. The six cluster labels are (a) Professional Growth and Development; (b) Institutional Onboarding; (c) Guidance and Understanding; (d) Communication and Feedback; (e) Humanity; and (f) Cultural Intelligence. The statements that are included in each cluster can be found in Appendix C.

Rating Analysis

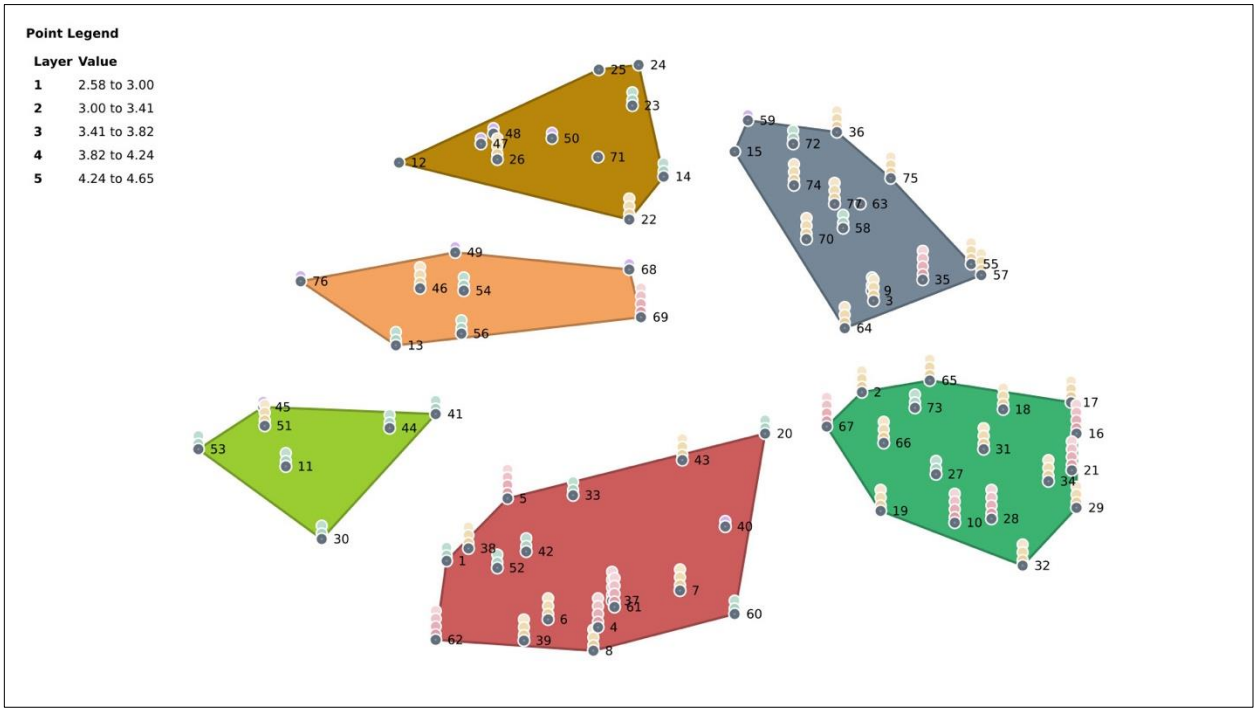
The sorting activity and subsequent hierarchical cluster analysis and bridging analysis provide a basis for understanding how the generated ideas relate to one another conceptually. The rating survey data provides insight to how participants placed value on individual idea statements. The Concept Systems software calculates the average value placed on individual statements and each cluster. As was outlined in Chapter III, participants in Phase 2 of the study were asked to rate each statement in relationship to two areas: level of importance and the extent to which the idea or need was currently being met or had been met in the past.

Importance Point Rating Map

Using a Likert scale, participants were able to indicate on a scale of 1 (not important) to 5 (very important) how important each idea was to their well-being and success. As is illustrated in Figure 4.6, the lowest average value for any individual statement was 2.58 and the highest was 4.65. The dots next to each statement on the point map indicates, on average, how highly each statement was rated. For example, statement 76 (model work life balance) only has two dots, indicating that the average importance rating was between 3.0 to 3.41. At the other end of the spectrum, statement 21 (clear communication) has five dots, indicating it falls within the highest importance rating category between 4.24 and 4.65.

Figure 4.6

Point Importance Rating Map

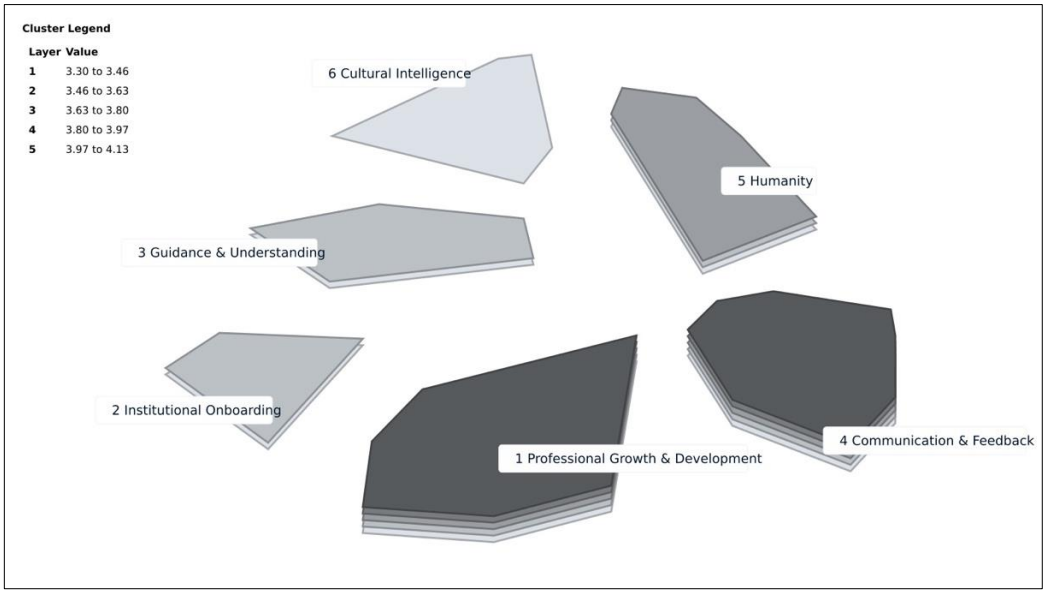


Cluster Importance Rating Map

The cluster importance rating map is a visual representation of the average importance rating across all statements in a cluster. Using the legend in the top left of Figure 4.7, you will see that the values are divided into five groupings with the lowest average rating being 3.30 and the highest of 4.13. The clusters are represented with one to five layers (color removed for ease of illustration). A single layer represents the lowest rated average in terms of importance and five layers indicates the highest average of importance.

Figure 4.7

Cluster Importance Rating Map



There is a small margin of difference in how participants rated the importance of each thematic area. The cluster that was rated highest in importance is Communication and Feedback. The specific cluster ratings for each area are:

Cluster 1 - Professional Growth and Development: 3.97
Cluster 2 - Institutional Onboarding: 3.61
Cluster 3 - Guidance and Understanding: 3.61
Cluster 4 - Communication and Feedback: 4.13
Cluster 5 - Humanity: 3.79
Cluster 6 - Cultural Intelligence: 3.30

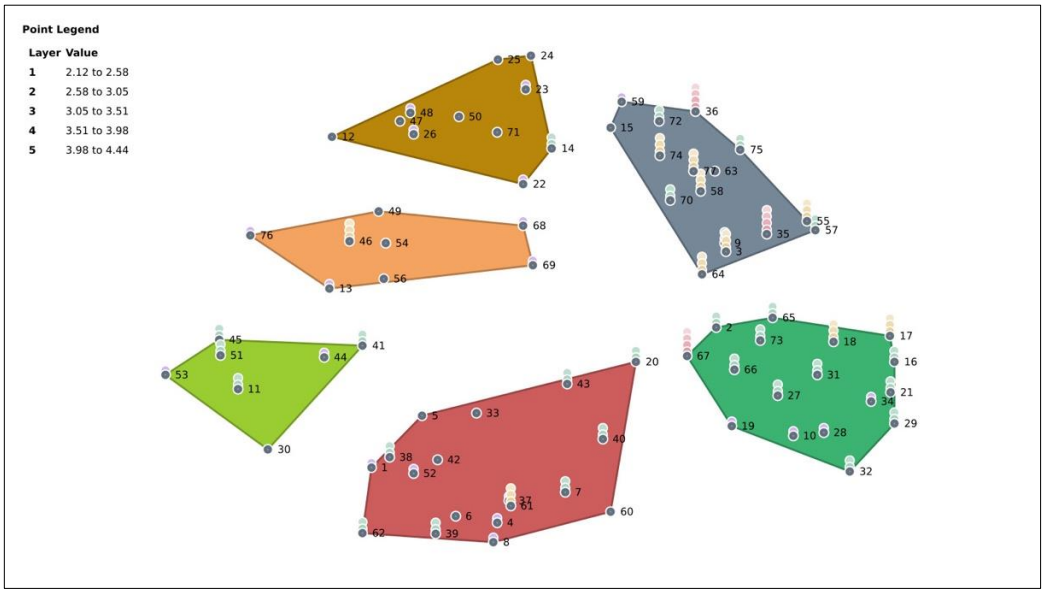
Extent Point Rating Map

Using a Likert scale, participants were able to indicate on a scale of 1 (not met at all) to 5 (completely met) to what extent a need is currently, or had been met in the past, by a supervisor. As is illustrated in Figure 4.8, the lowest average value for any individual statement was 2.12 and the highest was 4.44. The dots next to each statement on the point map indicates, on average, how participants reported the extent to which an individual need had been met.

For example, statement 12 (help navigating middle class life and resources) only has one dot, indicating that the extent to which that need had been met was only between 2.12 and 2.58. At the other end of the spectrum, statement 36 (flexibility to leave work if family situations arise) has five dots, indicating that participants had reported that the need was close to completely met with an overall average between 3.98 and 4.44.

Figure 4.8

Extent Point Rating Map



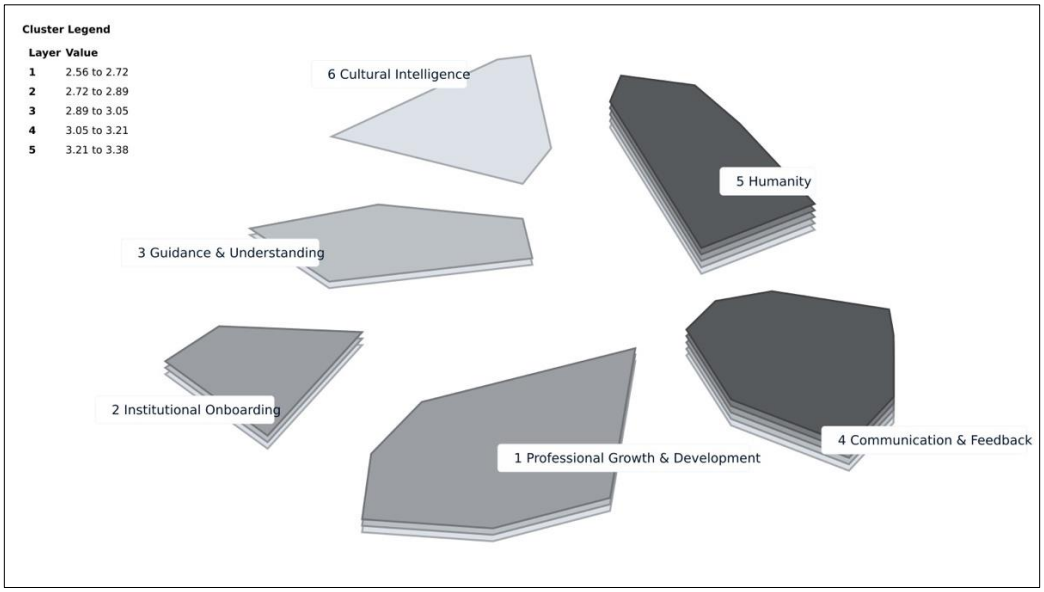
Cluster Extent Rating Map

The cluster extent rating map is a visual representation of the average extent to which needs had been met across all statements in a cluster. Using the legend in the top left of Figure 4.9, you will see that the values are divided into five groupings with the lowest average rating being 2.56 and the highest of 3.38. The clusters are represented with one to five layers (color removed for ease of illustration). A single layer represents the lowest rated average in terms of

extent to which the cluster needs had been met and five layers indicates the highest average of extent met.

Figure 4.9

Extent Cluster Rating Map



There is a fair margin of difference in how participants reported the extent to which needs had been met in each thematic area. The specific cluster ratings for each area are:

Cluster 1 - Professional Growth and Development: 2.94
Cluster 2 - Institutional Onboarding: 2.97
Cluster 3 - Guidance and Understanding: 2.78
Cluster 4 - Communication and Feedback: 3.28
Cluster 5 - Humanity: 3.38
Cluster 6 - Cultural Intelligence: 2.56

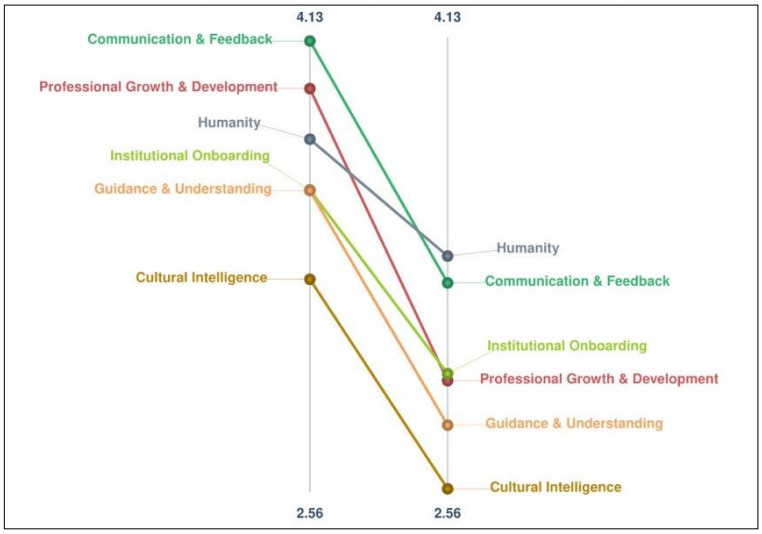
Pattern Matches

A pattern match is the comparison of cluster ratings across criteria such as different rating scales or specific demographic criteria. A Pearson product moment correlation co-efficient (*r value*) is computed by the platform, which indicates the alignment, or strength of the correlation, between the average cluster ratings on the ladder graph axes (Kane & Trochim,

2007). Pattern matches use a ladder graph representation; one variable is illustrated on each vertical axis. The position of each cluster on the ladder is representative of its rating value. Higher rated clusters appear near the top, lower nearer the bottom. In an absolute comparison, the highest and lowest ratings on each axis serve as anchors.

Figure 4.10

Pattern Match Importance on Left vs Extent on Right



The ladder graph in Figure 4.10 above illustrates a comparison of cluster importance to the extent to which the needs in the cluster are being met. For an absolute comparison, the axis values are illustrated using the highest rated level of importance, and lowest rated extent to which the cluster need had been met. Lines that match the colors in the original cluster map are drawn between the clusters on each side of the graph. The “Extent Met” axis is on the right. The “Importance” axis is on the left. The *r value* of the pattern match in Figure 4.10 is .76, which is indicative of a strong correlation between clusters with higher importance ratings also being rated higher in extent met, while also indicating gaps between the two.

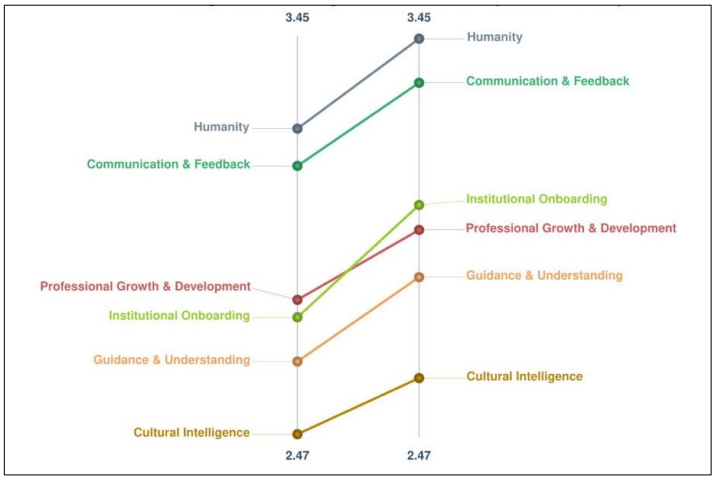
Cultural Intelligence appears at the bottom of the right axis because it had the lowest average “extent met” rating at 2.56. Humanity appears nearer the top as it was the cluster with the highest “extent met” rating at 3.38 of all six clusters. It is not at the top of the axis because 3.38 is well below the highest importance rating. Communication and Feedback appears at the top of the Importance axis with average highest importance at 4.13.

Racial and Ethnic Differences

The pattern match ladder graph in Figure 4.11 illustrates the difference between how participants who identified as people of color (left axis) reported the extent to which their supervisory needs were being met as compared to their white counterparts (right axis). The *r value* of the pattern match in Figure 4.11 is .99, which is indicative of almost exact alignment between how participants reported the extent to which needs were being met. The graph is noteworthy in that across all six cluster themes, white first-gen professionals reported having their needs met to a higher extent.

Figure 4.11

Pattern Match People of Color Extent Met on Left vs White People Extent Met on Right

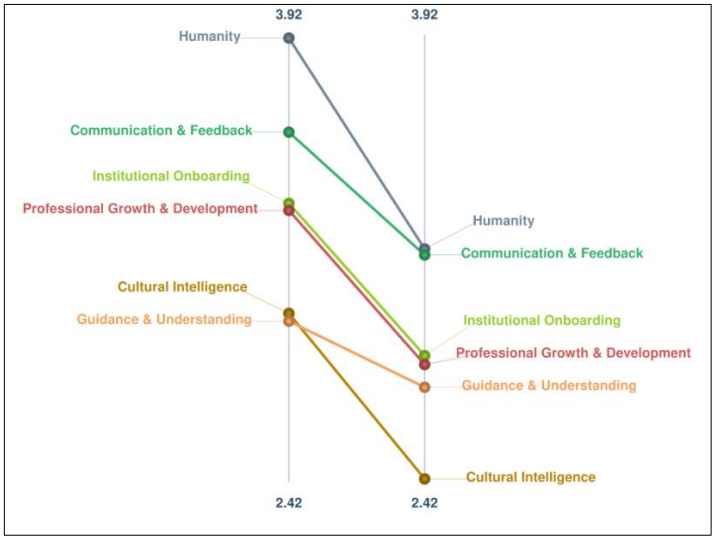


Career Differences

The pattern match ladder graph in Figure 4.12 illustrates the difference between how participants who identified as being early in their career (left axis) reported the extent to which their supervisory needs were being met as compared to their later-in-career counterparts (right axis). The graph is noteworthy in that across all six cluster areas, first-gen professionals who did not identify as being early career professionals reported to having their supervisory needs met to a lesser extent.

Figure 4.12

Pattern Match Early Career Professionals on Left vs. All Others Extent Met on Right



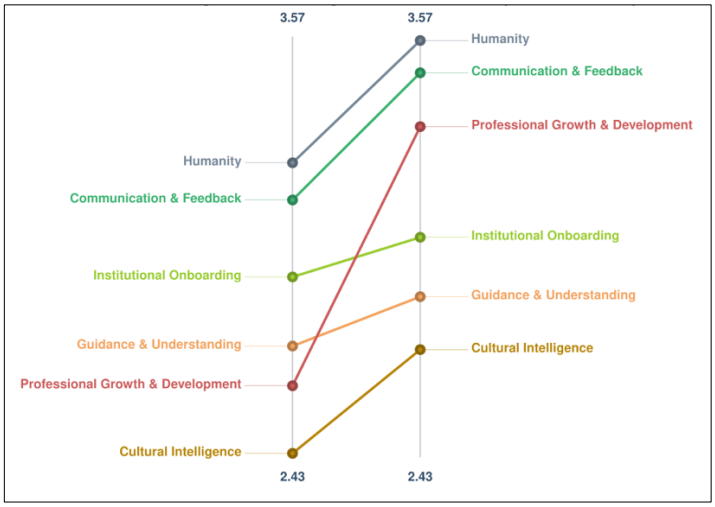
Differences in Institution Size

The pattern match ladder graph in Figure 4.13 illustrates the difference between how participants who currently work at large institutions reported the extent to which their supervisory needs were being met as compared to their colleagues at smaller colleges and universities (right axis). The graph is noteworthy in that across all six cluster areas, first-gen

professionals who work at smaller institutions reported having their supervisory needs met to a greater extent than those at large institutions.

Figure 4.13

Pattern Match Large Institutions vs. All Others Extent Met

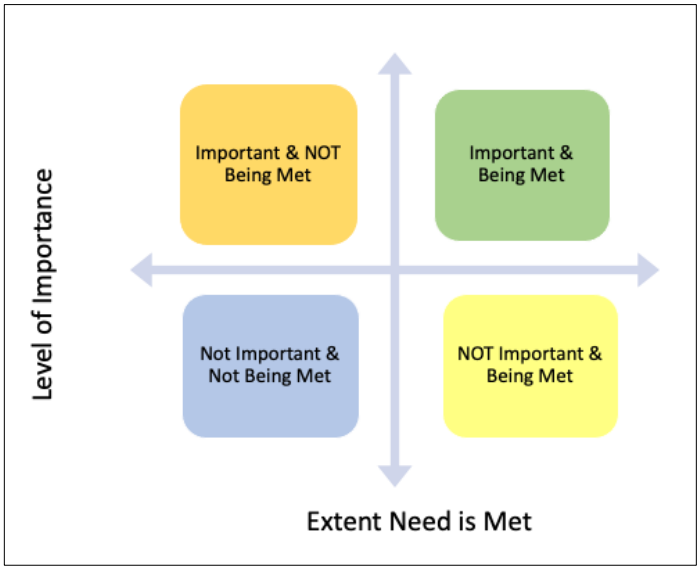


Go Zone Graphs

Go Zones are bi-variate graphs of statement values for two rating variables. The Go Zone is divided into quadrants above and below the mean of each variable (Kane & Trochim, 2007). In this study, the four quadrants of a Go Zone Graph indicate how an idea statement was simultaneously rated either above the mean in importance and extent met; above the mean in importance but below the mean of extent met; below the mean in terms of importance and extent met; or below the mean in importance but above the mean for extent met. An illustration using the correlated color scheme for all of the forthcoming Go Zone graphs is provided (Figure 4.14).

Figure 4.14

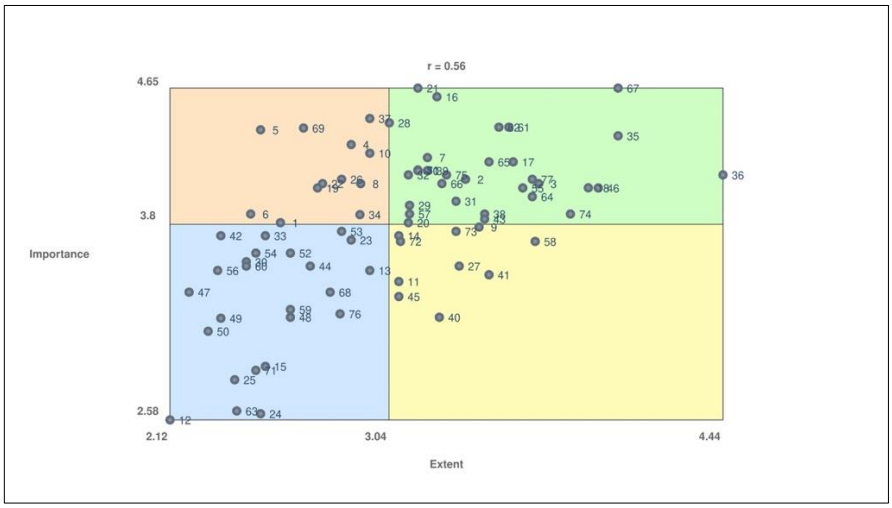
Go Zone Quadrant Illustration



This is an extremely useful graph because it provides a simplified visual aid to identifying what is important and already present, as well as what important needs are not being met.

Figure 4.15

Go Zone All Clusters



Within the Go Zone graph presented in Figure 4.15, all clusters are represented. Across all statements in all clusters, the highest average importance rating was 4.65, and the lowest was 2.58. The importance mean was 3.8. Across all statements in all clusters, the lowest average extent met rating was 2.12, with the highest being 4.44. The mean for extent met was 3.04. Statements that are in the quadrant of high importance, but low extent met, across all clusters are:

1 - remove barriers to my growth and success
4 - advocate for my career advancement and resources
5 - inclusion "at the table" on decisions that impact me
6 - guidance for my next career steps
8 - opportunities to gain experience outside of my current role/office
10 - honest evaluation of my skills and abilities
19 - clear 1:1 meetings so I know what to expect
22 - a team environment that values MY background and experiences
26 - acknowledgement that racism exists in our department/college
34 - regular/consistent feedback
37 - opportunities for growth
69 - recognize the unique skill set I bring to the department and compensate me for it

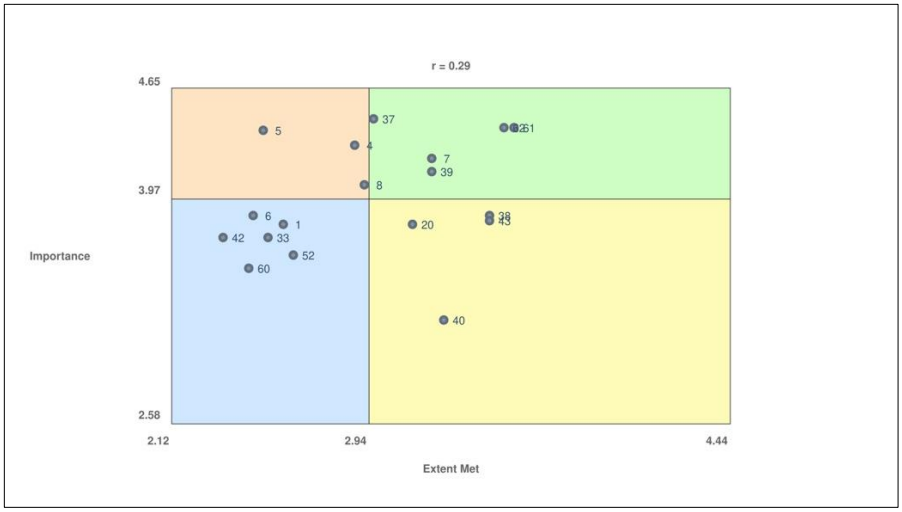
This “all cluster” graph provides a broad snapshot for reference in viewing where each need lies in relationship to all others that were identified. Figure 4.15 illustrates, without the thematic clusters, how participants rated importance and extent to which needs are met, however the mean lines for the individual clusters are not the same. The mean lines for each individual cluster are different. In other words, while the X/Y coordinates of average ratings will be the same, some needs are not located in the same zone on the “all clusters” map as it is in the individual clusters.

As an example, in the All Cluster Go Zone graph of Figure 4.15, statement 37 (opportunities for growth) is in the upper left quadrant of high importance, but low extent met. In the Growth & Development cluster specific Go Zone graph below in Figure 4.16, statement

37 appears in the upper right quadrant. This difference exists because the mean for extent met for statements included in this specific cluster is 2.94, whereas the mean for all statements was 3.04. Because of differences like this, I have computed Go Zone graphs for each cluster, which provide more nuanced answers to my research question as it relates to each identified cluster theme. The proceeding discussion will focus on the upper left quadrant of the Go Zone graphs, the area that represents high importance and low extent met.

Figure 4.16

Go Zone Cluster 1 Growth & Development

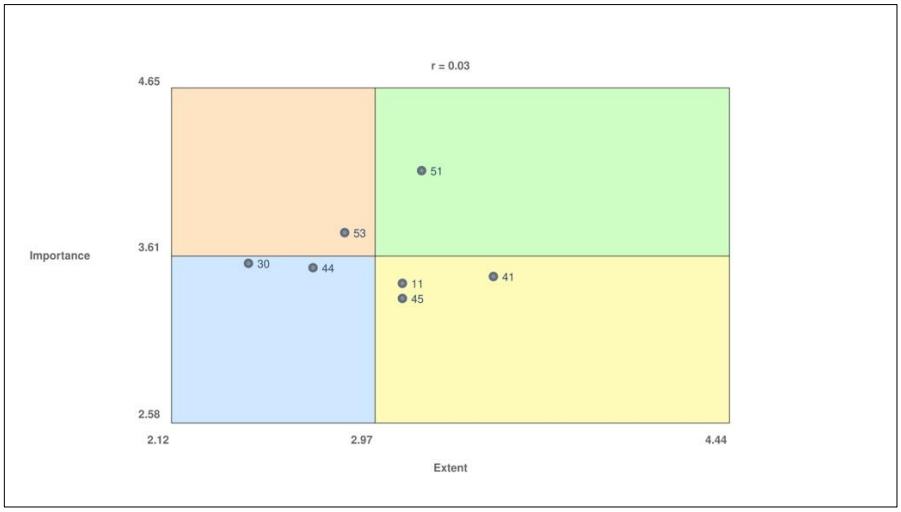


Statements of focus in Figure 4.16 Go Zone graph of Cluster 1 are:

4 - advocate for my career advancement and resources
5 - inclusion "at the table" on decisions that impact me
8 - opportunities to gain experience outside of my current role/office

Figure 4.17

Go Zone Cluster 2 Institutional Onboarding

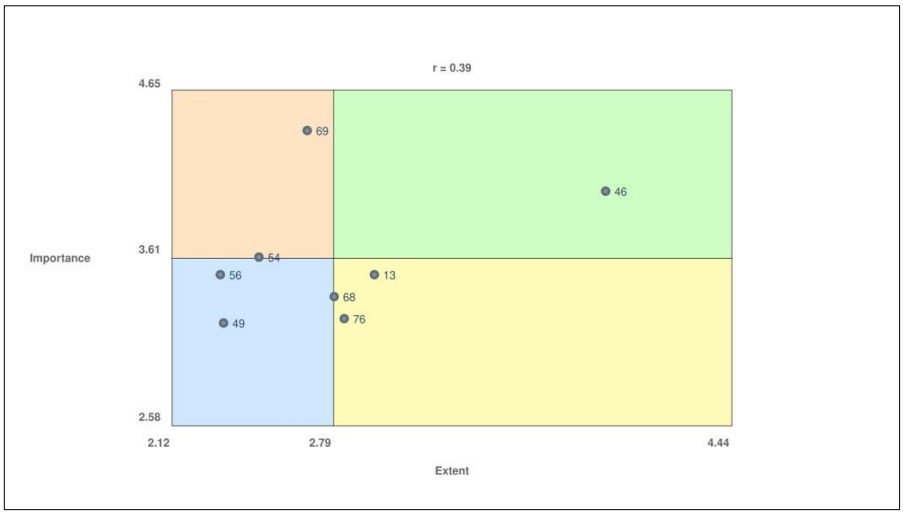


Statements of focus in Figure 4.17 Go Zone graph of Cluster 2 are:

53 - guidance for navigating university politics and norms

Figure 4.18

Go Zone Cluster 3 Guidance & Understanding

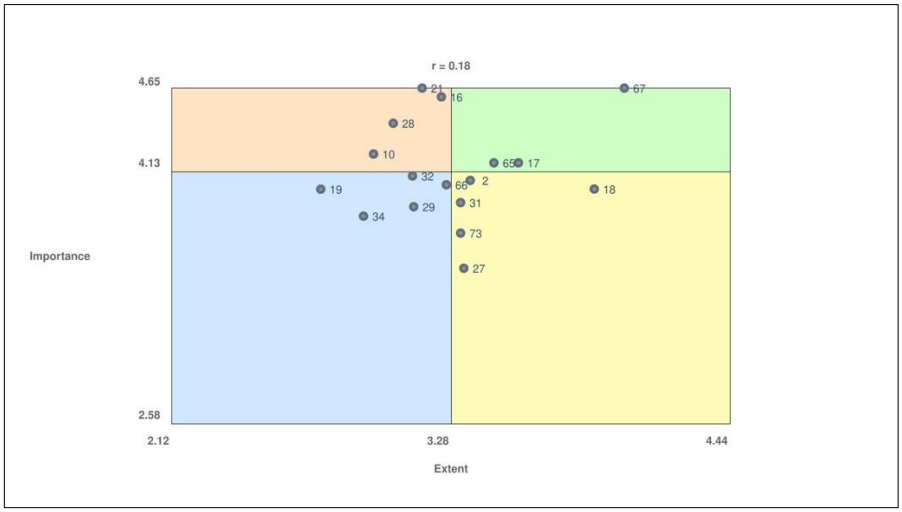


Statements of focus in Figure 4.18 Go Zone graph of Cluster 3 are:

54 - understand I want to take initiative, but am often doing so without a roadmap
69 - recognize the unique skill set I bring to the department and compensate me for it

Figure 4.19

Go Zone Cluster 4 Communication & Feedback

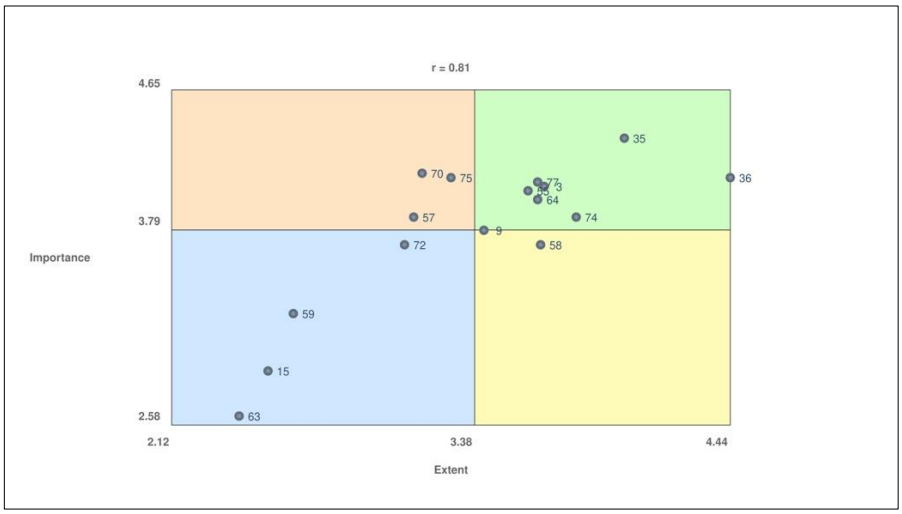


Statements of focus in the Go Zone graph of Cluster 4 are:

10 - honest evaluation of my skills and abilities
16 - honest, authentic, transparent communication
21 - clear communication
28 - clear direction and communication about expectations

Figure 4.20

Go Zone Cluster 5 Humanity

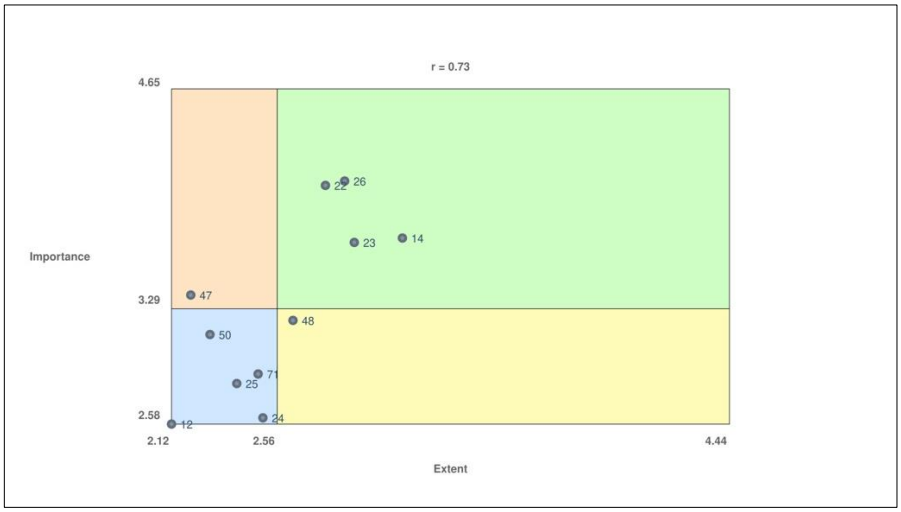


Statements of focus in the Go Zone graph of Cluster 5 are:

57 - support for personal goals
70 - consideration for who I am as a person and what will work best for me
75 - support my self-care and work life balance

Figure 4.21

Go Zone Cluster 6 Cultural Intelligence



Statements of focus in the Go Zone graph of Cluster 6 are:

47 - understanding that imposter syndrome doesn't go away

The areas highlighted above from each of the Go Zone graphs represent areas for the development of new approaches or improvement to what exists in terms of supervisory offerings. Many of these will be discussed in the implications for practice segment of Chapter V. Similarly, some of the statements in the upper right quadrant, which are high in importance and high in extent met, will be discussed more fully in Chapter V. This will highlight what supervisors are currently doing well, and should be maintained, in meeting the needs of first-gen professionals.

Summary

In summary, the findings of this study indicate that first-generation professionals have identified six thematic need areas that supervisors can address to support their well-being and success. These are: (a) Professional Growth and Development; (b) Institutional Onboarding; (c) Guidance and Understanding; (d) Communication and Feedback; (e) Humanity; and (f) Cultural Intelligence. It was also made apparent that across these themes there is a disconnect between how first-gen professionals rated the importance of needs and the extent to which those needs have been met by a supervisor.

Findings also indicated that people of color reported lower rates of having their needs met than did their white counterparts. Similarly, first-generation professionals who are not in the early stages of their career reported lower levels of having their needs met than did their early-career colleagues. First-gen professionals who work at large institutions reported having their needs met to a lesser degree than did their counterparts at smaller institutions.

In Chapter V, I will address how this study has answered each of the research questions and positively contributed to the field of higher education. Further, I will explore how the results relate to existing literature centering first-generation professionals. I will then discuss the implications for the field, those supervising or preparing supervisors, and first-generation professionals themselves. I will close the chapter by discussing the study limitations and suggestions for future research that could address some of the noteworthy findings highlighted here.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

Introduction

The purpose of this mixed-method study was to learn what first-generation professionals believe they need from their supervisor to support their well-being and success. The findings from this study address what first-generation professionals need from their supervisors to support their well-being and success, how important each of the identified needs are, and to what extent these needs are being met.

This chapter begins by articulating how the concept mapping process was leveraged to answer the research questions. I will then identify how Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth Theory and Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent et al., 2000) served as conceptual frameworks that provided a valuable lens through which to analyze the data collected as a part of this research study. Following this, I present an outline of the thematic clusters and associated idea statements, then provide a discussion of the practice implications. The concept mapping analysis and results were conducted using the Concept Systems, Inc. groupwisdom application (Build 2021.24.01, 2022).

Embedded in the associated cluster discussions, I offer recommendations for supervisory practice as they relate to the literature describing the impact of supervision on well-being and success. In the latter portion of this chapter, I put forward suggestions for prioritizing areas of focus within the field of higher education by leveraging components of the Go Zone graphs. To conclude, I describe limitations to the study and possibilities for future research.

How the Purpose of the Study Was Met

Each phase of this study centered the voices, thoughts, and experiences of first-generation professionals working in higher education. To this end, the core purpose of learning what first-generation professionals believe they need from their supervisor to support their well-being and success was met.

Phase 1: Idea Generation

In phase 1, idea generation, first-generation professionals brainstormed nearly one 140 ways they thought their supervisors could support their well-being and success. Some of these ideas, such as “detailed onboarding/information related to new tasks” and “affirmation and recognition of successes” are very reflective of what one might generally think of regarding supervisory practice. Other ideas such as “understand I want to take initiative but, am often doing so without a roadmap” and “a team environment that values MY background and experiences” offer a unique nuance, pointing to previously untold perspectives and offering new approaches in the supervision of first-generation professionals.

Phase 2: Idea Structuring - Sorting

In phase 2, participants sorted idea statements into conceptually similar themes, which were subsequently grouped and labeled into six unique clusters during the participant review committee session described in Chapter IV. The six cluster areas are: (a) Professional Growth and Development; (b) Institutional Onboarding; (c) Guidance and Understanding; (d) Communication and Feedback; (e) Humanity; and (f) Cultural Intelligence. The cluster map provides a broad framework for supervision of first-gen professionals based on the needs

identified by first-generation professionals themselves. The individual statements within each cluster provide specific tactics.

Phase 2: Idea Structuring - Rating

Each cluster is multi-dimensional and contributes to understanding how first-generation professionals in higher education are thinking of their supervisory needs. The second activity in phase 2 asked participants to rate how important each idea statement was to their well-being and success, and to identify the extent to which that need was being met. Cluster 4, Communication and Feedback, was rated highest in terms of importance (4.13) while Cluster 5, Humanity, was rated highest in terms of needs that were being met (3.38). Importantly, across all clusters, as is illustrated below in Table 5.1, participants rated the importance of needs higher than the extent to which those needs are being met.

Table 5.1

Importance vs Extent Needs Are Met

Importance	Extent
Cluster 1- Professional Growth and Development: 3.97	Cluster 1- Professional Growth and Development: 2.94
Cluster 2- Institutional Onboarding: 3.61	Cluster 2- Institutional Onboarding: 2.97
Cluster 3- Guidance and Understanding: 3.61	Cluster 3- Guidance and Understanding: 2.78
Cluster 4- Communication and Feedback: 4.13	Cluster 4- Communication and Feedback: 3.28
Cluster 5- Humanity: 3.79	Cluster 5- Humanity: 3.38
Cluster 6- Cultural Intelligence: 3.30	Cluster 6- Cultural Intelligence: 2.56

These gaps illustrate that even for supervisors who are performing the identified role tasks or exhibiting identified qualities, there is room for growth and improvement to better align the extent to which needs are being met with the level of importance. Altogether, the

rating data provides a grounding, using the Go Zones, for prioritizing the clusters areas that were rated high in need, but low in extent to which the needs were met. With the purpose of the study having been met, these implications are a key contribution of this study, and will be explored in-depth via a cluster-by-cluster analysis.

Reflections on the Theoretical Framework

Each cluster is multi-dimensional and contributes to understanding how first-generation professionals in higher education are thinking of their supervisory needs. Two conceptual frameworks provided a valuable lens through which to analyze the data collected as a part of this research study. Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth Theory centers the knowledge and lived experiences of marginalized communities as valuable assets (capital) that can facilitate success. Community Cultural Wealth includes aspirational, navigational, social, familial, linguistic, and resistance capitals. Social Cognitive Career Theory centers three variables: self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and choice goals. This framework also incorporates how historical and contextual factors impact an individual, their sense of efficacy, and expectations related to the idea of choice, and considering the impact of those choices (Lent et al., 2000).

Implications via Cluster-by-Cluster Analysis

Each of the six clusters merit thorough exploration informed by the literature centering the first-generation experience, supervision, and well-being. The findings put forward some possible direction for supervisor practitioners, and first-generation professionals themselves. Also embedded in the forthcoming cluster discussions, are suggestions for the field of higher education.

Professional Growth and Development (Cluster 1)

The foundation of aspirational capital are the hopes and dreams that one has for the future (Yosso, 2005). Need statements related to belief in one's skills and abilities, or capacity to develop the needed skills to achieve goals (Lent et al., 2000) were among the most prominent shared in this cluster. Opportunities to expand professional skill sets, be exposed to new people and ideas, and stay current on emerging higher-ed trends are all elements of what could be considered professional growth and development. Having access to these learning experiences are key components to research participants' capacity to do well in their current role, and in developing the confidence and knowledge base that could support career advancement. In this cluster, participants included idea statements that centered around themes such as access, guidance, and curated opportunities as ways supervisors could support professional growth and development.

Implications for Practice

The idea of leveraging their supervisor as a means to accessing growth opportunities and serve as a "champion" of their development was articulated in a few different ways. The following statements reflect this idea of the supervisor as gatekeeper to access in various respects:

1 - remove barriers to my growth and success
4 - advocate for my career advancement and resources
5 - inclusion "at the table" on decisions that impact me
52 - introductions and connections so I can build my own networks and capital

Participants also spoke about seeing their supervisor as someone who could not only provide guidance for their being successful in their current role, but also as a resource in supporting their developmental goals. The statements below illustrate this ideal:

6 - guidance for my next career steps
40 - push to be successful
42 - advice on how to navigate my career and any roadblocks I face
43 - challenge and support
60 - regular conversations about developmental goals vs. task goals
20 - space for reflection and processing situations
33 - feedback on how to advocate effectively
7 - encourage and support my career development

The statements wherein participants focused on opportunity is where they offered thoughts on how they want their supervisor to operate from a place of supporting their potential. Participants also clearly put forward a desire to develop new skill skills toward their continued growth. The generalized statements below reflect this, while some also offer proposed strategies:

37 - opportunities for growth
8 - opportunities to gain experience outside of my current role/office
38 - growth mindset
39 - leadership opportunities
61 - opportunity for learning new skills
62 - professional development opportunities and resources

Recommendations

Professional growth and development are an integral component of continued learning and professional competency for higher education professionals and is central to the role of their respective supervisors. The ideas that participants put forward correlate to existing literature in validating that professional development opportunities promote aspirational and social capital (Yosso, 2005), support growth and development (Tull, 2009), and contribute to well-being (Seligman, 2011). The idea statements provided by participants serve as a foundation to recommendations for practice.

With regard to increasing access to and for professional development, supervisors should be in conversation with their supervisees to co-construct learning opportunities. Elements associated with this could include ensuring that financial resources are made available through the institution or that the human resources associated with the learning goals are made available. Similarly, the supervisory relationship must be developed through a lens of a growth-mindset, specifically one that values and builds upon the navigational capital that the supervisee has developed to get where they are. Supervisors would also do well to leverage their networks as they work along-side their supervisees in growing their own social capital.

The guidance that supervisors can offer is also clearly articulated in participant idea statements. They are looking for supervisors to support both where they are professionally, as well as to serve as a resource in identifying what their next professional steps could be; and then to be an ally in attaining the knowledge, tools, and skills needed to get there. Regular check-ins and honest exchanges about what is, and what could be, are required for this to be effective. Associated with this, supervisees stated that they need to be able to feel secure in sharing their areas for growth and feel confident that they will receive the guidance needed to best advocate on their own behalf.

Beyond access to development and guidance, participants also identified advocacy toward opportunity as something that their supervisors could offer. Being able to be present "at the table," taking on leadership roles, as well as opportunities to engage in activities outside of their current role were articulated as ways that supervisors could be supportive. Examples of this could include supervisors inviting supervisees to strategic meetings, creating opportunities for leading internal and external projects or initiatives, or taking on their own supervisees. A

means to engage supervisees in activities outside of their current role could also be to appoint them to interdepartmental committees or to identify institutional needs that also align with the supervisee's passions and career goals.

Institutional Onboarding (Cluster 2)

Yosso (2005) frames navigational capital as the ability to effectively maneuver through systems and institutions. Such is the basis for this cluster. Opportunities for new employees, or employees new to a role, to become familiar with resources, roles, and responsibilities are key factors to be included in institutional onboarding. This process can be pivotal in providing a platform for supervisors and new colleagues to share additional information about a new position that may not necessarily be clear from the position description.

Navigational capital relates to ongoing orientation to institutional philosophies and unspoken departmental norms (Yosso, 2005) that underpin well-being and success for supervisees. Similarly, the dimensions of familial capital that are related to storytelling and the sharing of experiences and histories (Yosso, 2005) were present in the idea statements as in this cluster. Participants centered the theme of having a structured process that would provide support in their acclimating across roles in their career span.

Implications for Practice

Participants were very concrete in articulating that they look to their supervisors to not only influence how they experience onboarding but were prescriptive in outlining what kinds of information needs to be included in the process, particularly as it relates to being new to the role, department, or institution:

11 - help adjusting to my specific role
30 - detailed onboarding/information related to new tasks

Additional statements in this cluster made it clear that participants did not see "onboarding" as being time-bound to the first days and weeks of new employment. The framing with these statements suggests that supervisors should be engaged in ongoing "orienting" activities as the context of the needed knowledge or references evolve:

41 - share guidance from their own professional experience
44 - reference materials and openness to processing how to address situations
53 - guidance for navigating university politics and norms
51 - share institutional knowledge/information
45 - role model what a professional does

Recommendations

First-gen professionals who have the benefit of an onboarding experience that lends to their establishing confidence in understanding their role responsibilities and available resources are more likely to feel supported by their supervisor and the institution overall. The ideals that participants put forward align with existing literature in acknowledging that institutional onboarding and continued orientation promotes improved work performance and retention (Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008) as well as navigational capital (Yosso, 2005). Because first-gen status is not a demographic recorded as a part of institutional employment applications, intentionality in standardizing the content of onboarding and ongoing orientation resources is necessary. That being said, using the idea statements of this study's participants could be of benefit for all employees.

As a part of new employee orientation, well organized and easily accessible materials that offer basic information related to an institution's stated mission, vision, and values, as well as departmental strategic plans, could be of good use. Similarly, taking steps to develop employee handbooks that offer guidance on role-specific responsibilities, policies, and norms

would be of value. In this same arena, it does not go without saying that creating a resource that clearly outlines measures of role-specific success aligned with unit-based objectives, as well as campus-based resources that are positioned to support goal attainment, would also be useful.

As stated previously, as situations and contexts change, access to information and knowledge of associated resources must be a continued part of the supervisory equation. Ideas statements associated with the concept of supervisors offering something of an ongoing orientation process center moving from the concrete information needed to do the job toward seeking input on how to successfully navigate contexts, politics, and new situations. Participants articulated that they would like for this to come both from opportunities to observe positive modeling from a supervisor, as well as open collaborative conversations intended to empower the supervisee to process new experiences and develop a course of action.

Guidance and Understanding (Cluster 3)

Themes of both navigational and familial capital (Yosso, 2005) were omni-present in this cluster. Supervision that includes offering support when faced with challenges related to imposter syndrome or navigating what could be called the "hidden professional curriculum" within higher education may well be considered integral factors in first gen professional well-being and success. As written by Yosso (2005):

> Familal capital refers to those cultural knowledges nurtured among familia (kin) that carry a sense of community history, memory and cultural intuition … This form of cultural wealth engages a commitment to community wellbeing and expands the concept of family to include a more broad understanding of kinship. (p. 79)

The ideas that participants identified require that supervisors display a certain level of emotional intelligence as they observe their supervisees seeking to establish professional boundaries and forge ahead in their careers. Illustrating dimensions of valuing their own linguistic and resistant capital (Yosso, 2005), and that they perceive their first-generation identity as a strength, participants also articulated a desire for their supervisors to value and respect it as such.

Implications for Practice

Overarchingly, the idea statements reflected in this cluster center ideals of self-concept, self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations and are articulated through a few different themes. The first is institutional navigational needs:

> 13 - grace and understanding in dealing with unspoken higher ed rules
> 46 - patience and understanding with questions
> 54 - understand I want to take initiative, but am often doing so without a roadmap

Additionally, participants voiced a desire to have increased access to socio-emotional navigation in the form of modeling, guidance, and affirmation:

> 49 - encouragement and affirmations to work through self-doubt and imposter syndrome
> 56 - guidance on navigating workplace related burnout, boundaries, imposter syndrome, etc.
> 76 - model work life balance

The final statements in this cluster highlight how first-gen participants see their unique experience as a "value-add" in providing support to others who share a first-gen identity:

> 68 - value and respect the additional work I do in mentoring other first-gens
> 69 - recognize the unique skill set I bring to the department and compensate me for it

Recommendations

First-generation professionals could benefit when supervisors actively partner with them in framing their backgrounds and experiences as strengths as they further develop their own forms of capital. Further, it would be of benefit for supervisors to model how to leverage the capital first-gen professionals already possess toward their professional well-being and success. In this cluster, participants put forward statements associated with existing literature that supports the idea that emotionally intelligent guidance and support from supervisors lends to the positive development of navigational capital (Yosso, 2005) and maintenance of self-efficacy (Lent et al., 2000), and contributes positively to a sense of well-being (Seligman, 2011).

Supervisors who demonstrate emotional intelligence, specifically insights associated with the unique experience of those who may be the first in their families to hold white collar positions, can be particularly useful in this development. This requires an identity-conscious approach that takes into consideration the unique background and experiences of each person they supervise, which in turn requires taking time and investing in getting to know their supervisees. Seeing a supervisee's strengths, naming those, and working to intentionally leverage the tools, resistance, and navigational skills that have resulted in their success in the past would contribute positively to feelings of self-efficacy and a self-concept of capability. Observing, naming, and tangibly rewarding the value of first-gen professionals mentoring other first-gen professionals and students also demonstrates the idea of various forms of capital being valued in the institution.

Supervisors would do well to encourage direct conversations that bring to light the oft hidden norms of academia. There could also be value in providing examples of how they themselves may have managed similar experiences in the past. Similarly, modeling healthy vulnerability and boundary setting offers additional visible options for supervisees to emulate in further developing roadmaps toward their own well-being and success.

Communication and Feedback (Cluster 4)

The variables present in Lent et al.'s (1994) Social Cognitive Career Theory are salient to this cluster. Through feedback about skills and performance, self-efficacy beliefs are developed. One could argue that a supervisory relationship that is built on clear and direct communication minimizes role expectation ambiguity and increases interpersonal connections. This, in turn, impacts outcome expectations. Providing a platform for supervisees to be heard establishes a culture that makes clear that their contributions are valued.

Consistently providing feedback also demonstrates a supervisor's investment in not only successful completion of the work at hand, but also an investment in the supervisee's goal attainment, professional development, and success (Lent et al., 2000). In this cluster, participants included idea statements that centered around supervisory interactions that are indicative of being receptive to a supervisee's self-advocacy and ideas, consistently sharing evaluative feedback, initiating open dialogue and clear communication about expectations.

Implications for Practice

The notion that participants want their supervisor to value their thoughts and opinions was articulated both in terms of validating ideas and new ways of doing things, but also to actively encourage them to do so. The following statements reflect this idea:

2 - support and encouragement when I speak up in the workplace
65 - acknowledge and validate my opinions, suggestions, and feedback
66 - openness to new ideas and ways of seeing/doing things

Participants also indicated that they want to hear from their supervisor regularly with regard to evaluation of their performance. They suggested that it was important to them to receive accolades when earned, and coaching when needed. This was illustrated through these idea statements:

10 - honest evaluation of my skills and abilities
31 - positive feedback
32 - honest constructive feedback
34 - regular/consistent feedback
67 - professional autonomy that shows I am trusted to do my job
73 - affirmation and recognition of successes

The participant statements that pointed to an overall desire to have positive open communication with their supervisor spoke to an aspiration to have an even exchange as well as more informal opportunities to check in:

16 - honest, authentic, transparent communication
17 - active listening
18 - opportunities to touch base
21 - clear communication

Several statements in this cluster called for supervisors to establish a communication or meeting pattern that would allow supervisees to acquire answers to questions and other information that would make expectations clear:

19 - clear 1:1 meetings so I know what to expect
27 - answers beyond job tasks
28 - clear direction and communication about expectations
29 - concrete answers

Recommendations

The ideals that participants put forward in this cluster align with existing literature in acknowledging that consistent, respectful communication conveys important information and promotes the development of constructive relationships through welcoming different perspectives (Ruben et al., 2017). This, in turn, impacts both retention (Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008) and life satisfaction toward well-being (Marshall et al., 2016). For supervision to be effective and impactful of these areas, a supervisor needs to able to communicate effectively.

One component of this is a capacity to actively listen to others and to take in ideas about different approaches to work with students and others. More specifically, first-gen professionals may bring different perspectives or experiences to the table that may have been dismissed or devalued in other settings. Study participants expressed a desire for their supervisors to not only be open to new ideas, but also to validate the worth of their voice and input.

Idea statements clearly illustrated the importance of a supervisory relationship built on reliability and the need to trust in the potential of helpfulness toward growth as well as a mutual respect of multiple perspectives. Supervisors would do well to encourage and empower first-gen professionals to leverage their backgrounds and experiences as strengths in contributing to their work in higher education. In reciprocal fashion, participants also expressed a desire to have exchanges that clearly communicate expectations and to receive consistent constructive feedback on their performance.

By creating a structure for these communication patterns during regular meeting times, the supervisory relationship can be built on a foundation that centers the importance of shared

reflection, accountability, and assessment of what is working and what is not. Outside of scheduled meetings, there might also be value in having an "open-door" policy that creates space for all involved to offer real-time feedback, reflection on events, and input to future actions. This, too, demonstrates the value of shared investment in the success of the individual in the role beyond, or in addition to, the success of the institution.

Humanity (Cluster 5)

Overarchingly, at the core of this cluster, participants' idea statements focused on their feeling seen, understood, and valued by the supervisors. They articulated a desire to have their supervisors go beyond knowing what is important to them, and to validate these values through flexibility and behaviors that demonstrate care. These desires correlate to existing literature related to familial capital which centers caring, coping, and providing (Yosso, 2005) toward community well-being.

It cannot go unmentioned that this study took place amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. One might posit that through this there has been a collective refocus on work-life balance or work-life integration. Folks are looking to their institutions and supervisors to put formal policies and practices into place that help support their professional and personal well-being. Such is the case for first-gen participants. The ideas in this cluster speak to several qualities of humanity such as understanding, flexibility and care.

Implications for Practice

Similar to Cluster 3's call for guidance and understanding, participants are looking to supervisors to bring a certain level of emotional intelligence to their interactions. Within the

theme of understanding in this cluster, participants statements include those related to professional aspirations, family status, professional journeys, and ability:

9 - understanding of my drive and ambition
15 - understanding that my family cannot supplement my income to help with life expenses
59 - understanding of how mental health or disabilities impact my performance
63 - understanding that I need more support than others
72 - understand that my experience has been a unique path to where I am today

The idea of flexibility, particularly a need for flexibility rooted in participants managing "more than just work," appeared through these statements:

35 - flexibility
36 - flexibility to leave work if family situations arise
74 - grace and understanding that I am juggling more than just work

Nurturing one on one relationships wherein a supervisor knows the personal goals and motivations of their supervisee, and an overall desire to feel cared about as a whole person appeared in several the statements:

3 - dependability; if you say you're going to be there, be there
55 - genuine care and patience
57 - support for personal goals
58 - effort in getting to know me
64 - support
70 - consideration for who I am as a person and what will work best for me
75 - support my self-care and work life balance
77 - care about me as a whole person

Recommendations

Aligning supervisory relationships with positive organizational values such as care and humanity is not a unique concept. However, the way in which first-gen participants have responded here does bring to light specific nuances such as how these professionals perceive and value supervisory support related to familial roles and responsibilities, as well as the depth

and breadth of interactions that center care and understanding. Further, in this cluster participants provided both ideals of emotional intelligence, as well as specific ideas about how to operationalize these ideals in relationship to both personal and professional success.

Related to the idea of understanding and flexibility, participant statements reflected thoughts connected to ability, their career trajectory, family dynamics, and financial situation. Moving these understandings to caring behaviors might include making campus resources that have traditionally only been focused on supporting students, also open to staff. This could include access to low or no-cost career attire, particularly for entry-level or front-line professionals; offering professional development opportunities via structured mentoring or career services; or invitations to chaperone service or study-abroad trips that contribute to professional growth and learning, while also supporting the student experience.

Along those same lines, supervisors could work with department heads to review or modify paid leave policies to allow differing definitions of “family”; standardize remote working options, or hybrid schedules. They might also involve acquiring funds that support the cost of webinars or travel to conferences. At its simplest, demonstrating understanding and flexibility is about listening to employee experiences, and working to build on strengths and remove barriers. Such is the case associated with demonstrating care.

Care, as put forward in participant statements, is reflective of supervisors taking the time to get to know their supervisees and building relationships with them wherein they are seen and appreciated as a “whole person.” Behaviors associated with this are reflected in other clusters of the study, such as ensuring that all voices are heard and validated, advocating for employee growth and development, and acknowledging successes. Offering no, or low-cost

family-friendly non-work-related gatherings or activities that supervisors and other colleagues can participate in together might also serve as an avenue toward nurturing teamwork, relationships and ways of knowing one another. All these factors also contribute to a sense of belonging in the workplace, which contributes positively to subjective well-being.

Cultural Intelligence (Cluster 6)

To possess and use resistant capital means to challenge inequity and subordination (Yosso, 2005). This cluster centered very specifically on participants expressing that they need their supervisors to create a working and supervisory environment wherein they felt they could be all of who they are, without having to assimilate.

Linguistic capital is described by Yosso (2005) as the combination of intellectual, social, and communication skills attained through language, history, and lived experiences. A similar undercurrent in the idea statements was the theme of wanting their backgrounds, skills, and capabilities to be received as valued assets in their work. Specific areas of identity and lived experience that were brought forward in this cluster included socioeconomic status, race, cultural valuing, and imposter syndrome.

Implications for Practice

The actionable component of this domain is why the participant review committee chose this label. The term cultural intelligence was very specifically chosen by the participant review committee. It can be defined as “a person’s adaptation to new cultural settings and capability to deal effectively with other people with whom the person does not share a common cultural background and understanding” (Earley & Ang, 2003, p. 34). It can also be described as not just an awareness of difference, but a multi-dimensional skill set that engages

cognitive, behavioral, and motivational intelligence toward working effectively across identities and diverse contexts (Ang & Van Dyne, 2008).

Participants raised the idea of having varied backgrounds and experiences related to socioeconomic status. This was illustrated through their statements associated with asking that their supervisors provide insight to both current and future status as well as to have a level of insight to understanding their past experiences as well. These statements were:

> 12 - help navigating middle class life and resources
> 71 - understand that I did not have the opportunity to do low paid internships or conferences because I could not afford to not work

The theme of identity salience was further expounded upon through idea statements centered on race. Participants brought dimensions of racial difference forward through statements that reflected needs addressing individual, institutional, and systemic impact:

> 24 - understanding of how I navigate the world as a person of color
> 25 - an approach that is relevant to me as a person of color
> 26 - acknowledgement that racism exists in our department/college

Again, reflecting a sense of identity pride, participants provided statements that went beyond suggesting that supervisors need to have a level of cultural awareness. Participants also directly addressed the idea that supervisors would do well to create a climate wherein white middle-class values and culture are not centered. Statements that included this ideal of diverse experiences and knowledge being validated, valued, and approached as an asset were:

> 14 - space to be myself without having to assimilate to be seen as professional
> 22 - a team environment that values MY background and experiences
> 23 - cultural understanding

Imposter syndrome is an idea first developed by Clance and Imes (1978). It is generally defined as feeling like a phony, underserving, or a fraud in relationship to successes,

knowledge, or skills. Participants alluded to its pervasive nature through their statements suggesting that supervisors need to understand what it is, as well as its impact across one's career span. Statements reflecting this were:

47 - understanding that imposter syndrome doesn't go away
48 - understanding of imposter syndrome
50 - understanding of how imposter syndrome impacts me in the workplace

Recommendations

This cluster highlights the significant impact that personal experiences and social identities have on the supervisory experience. Because of this, it is important for supervisors to recognize how each of these factors, including first-generation status, influences the ways in which individuals engage with supervision and make meaning of their experiences. The ideas reflected in this cluster are associated with existing literature that support the idea that an employee's sense of belonging and real or perceived cultural fit in the workplace impacts their performance and retention (Chatman et al., 2014).

The ability to effectively build relationships, communicate with cultural humility, and navigate identity conscious supervisory dynamics begins with an understanding of self. Consciousness of the impact of privileged and marginalized social identities within the supervisory relationship must be carefully considered. Supervisors would do well to actively explore issues of dominant and subordinated identities to lessen the likelihood of their exhibiting bias, holding stereotypes, or operating from a perspective that is not attuned to cultural factors.

Supervisors could also work to mitigate the presence and impact of sociopolitical contexts. This can be done in several ways. They can begin by de-centering white, middle-class

norms by actively seeking to learning more about cultural norms and mores outside of their own, reviewing and changing organizational norms in terms of hiring practices and promotion reviews, and actively seeking to build relationships with colleagues across difference.

Further, supervisors could model inclusion and affirmation by disrupting class-based bias, barring interrogation of immigration status, and dispelling stereotypes related to gender identity or expression, and interrupting racist actions. Through mutually respectful, trusting, open communication, supervisors can also work in collaboration with supervisees to mitigate the impact of imposter syndrome by regularly sharing a supervisee's strengths, and encouraging them to leverage what they have learned from past experiences toward future career development and relationship building practices. Intentional reflective and planning practices with the recommendations across all the clusters would serve to create a supervisory climate that demonstrates the cultural intelligence required to support first-gen professionals' well-being and success.

Utilization: Implications for the Field

Supervision in student affairs has been defined as a practice structured to support staff in their personal and professional development, and to promote organizational goals (R. Brown et al., 2019). As noted earlier in this dissertation, an effective supervisory relationship can, if intentionally structured to do so, be a "container" that holds both the organization's and supervisee's needs. The findings of this study echo adjacent literature that supports the idea that employee well-being and success can and should be supported by well-prepared, identity-conscious supervisors (Shupp & Arminio, 2012) across the timespan of their careers.

Strong supervision is essential to job satisfaction, and job satisfaction is key to well-being and staff retention. In exploring factors that impact employee retention amongst new professionals working in student affairs, Renn and Jessup-Anger (2008) highlighted the importance of positive supervisory relationships, mentoring, professional development opportunities, and realistic job expectations. Rosser and Javinar (2003) identified similar themes amongst mid-level professionals that centered their wanting professional development opportunities, advancement, compensation, and positive supervisory experiences. Mirroring these ideas, first-generation professionals in this study clearly communicated that supervision that employs the tenets of clear expectations and communication is integral to their being seen as a whole person and to their positive development across career span.

May et al. (2004) suggest that not only do relationships with colleagues and supervisors impact a sense of belonging and psychological safety in the workplace, but they also impact overall engagement and whether an employee sees their work as meaningful. First generation professionals are seeking to be seen and understood. In order to establish authentic relationships that are accountable to a broad spectrum of backgrounds and experiences, higher education professionals must begin by raising their own awareness of how their personal beliefs, values, attitudes, and behaviors impact those around them (Arminio et al., 2012). As suggested by Martínez and Holloway (1997), the benefits of this also contribute to one's capacity to model the importance of practitioner awareness of cultural and other identity-based factors both in practice and supervision.

As presented in Chapter II, there are two supervisory frameworks that could be applied in developing supervision with first generation professionals. With a strength of attending to a

supervisee's experience as a whole person, the synergistic supervision model has been cited as an effective supervisory framework, particularly with new professionals, within the field of student affairs (Winston & Creamer, 1997). Stock-Ward and Javorek (2003) present a developmental model of supervision for student affairs. It is based on the Integrated Developmental Model derived from counseling psychology supervision (Stoltenberg & McNeill, 1997). For either of these frameworks to be effective, I would strongly suggest the intentional integration of the recommendations that have been put forward by first generation professionals themselves.

All told, the idea statements and six thematic clusters that participants have offered provide a broad-sweeping roadmap for supervisory best practices in working with first-generation professionals in higher education. As a researcher, I was pleased to see the thorough reflection and thoughtful ideas that participants put forward. That said, as a supervisor-practitioner myself, I also recognize that the totality of idea statements alongside their associated recommendations might be a bit daunting. For this reason, I am framing implications for the field specific to utilizing two key findings from each cluster.

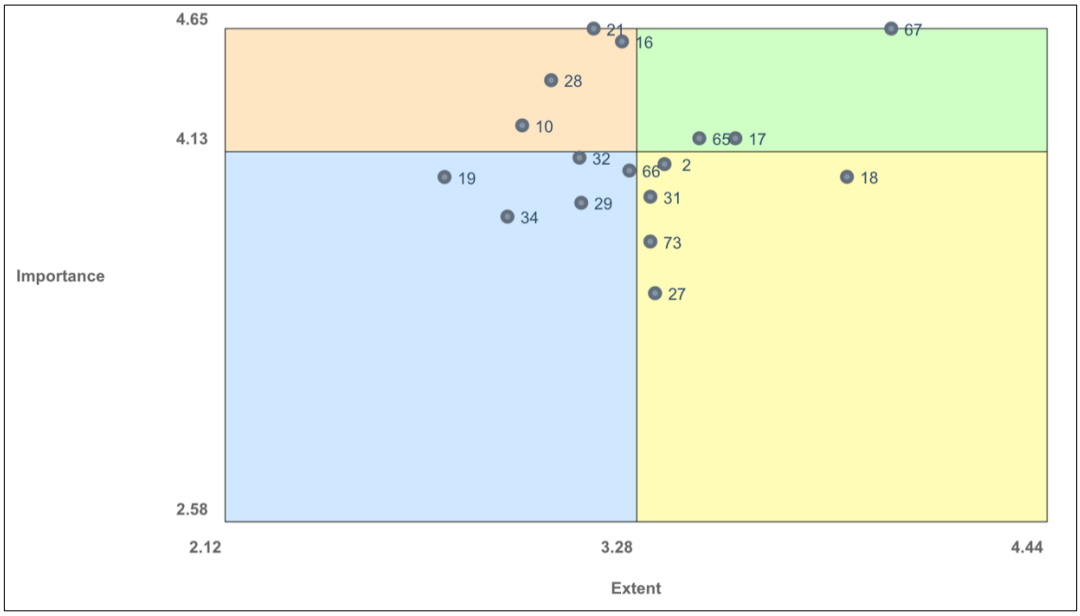
Using data from the Go Zone graphs from each thematic cluster, I am suggesting that the field of higher education supervision focus first on <u>maintaining</u> practices that participants indicated were going well, i.e., sharing the idea statement that participants indicated were above the mean in importance to them, and being met to the highest extent in the cluster. The second significant implication for the field is to work toward <u>improving</u> the actions which participants reported being missing from current practice, i.e., calling out the idea statements

that participants rated high in importance, but also reported being met to the lowest extent in the cluster.

In Figure 5.1, I share an example via the Go Zone graph from the Communication and Feedback cluster.

Figure 5.1

Go Zone Cluster 4 Communication & Feedback



In the upper right-hand quadrant, statement 67 (professional autonomy that shows I am trusted to do my job), is rated above the mean in importance. Within this cluster, this idea is rated highest overall in terms of extent to which the need is met. The implication for the field here is for supervisors to continue to maintain their efforts in supporting autonomy. Conversely, statement 10 (honest evaluation of my skills and abilities), is rated above the mean in importance but lowest overall in terms of the extent the need is being met. The implication for the field here is for supervisors to focus on intentionally improving their efforts related to evaluation.

As outlined above, in an effort to frame the totality of research results within a manageable context, I have suggested the utilization of two key findings from this study. I suggest that the field of higher education supervision seek to (a) maintain the high importance practices that are being met to a high extent, and (b) to improve upon the practices that have been rated lowest in terms of extent met. The identified implications for each cluster are:

Cluster 1: Professional Development
- Maintain: (62) professional development opportunities and resources
- Improve: (5) inclusion "at the table" on decisions that impact me

Cluster 2: Institutional Onboarding
- Maintain: (51) share institutional knowledge/information
- Improve: (53) guidance for navigating university politics and norms

Cluster 3: Guidance & Understanding
- Maintain: (46) patience and understanding with questions
- Improve: (69) recognize the unique skill set I bring to the department and compensate me for it

Cluster 4: Communication and Feedback
- Maintain: (67) professional autonomy that shows I am trusted to do my job
- Improve: (10) honest evaluation of my skills and abilities

Cluster 5: Humanity
- Maintain: (35) flexibility
- Improve: (57) support for personal goals

Cluster 6: Cultural Intelligence
- Maintain: (14) space to be myself without having to assimilate to be seen as professional
- Improve: (47) understanding that imposter syndrome doesn't go away

Embedded in the overall findings, as well as the targeted implications for the field that have been made explicit here, is a set of guideposts for first-generation professionals. The implications and recommendations both for practice and the field overall align with the ideal that there be a shared investment from supervisors and supervisees in leveraging their

strengths, capabilities, and resiliencies. These ideals are reflected in the theoretical frameworks that were utilized to make sense of the data throughout this analysis process.

Limitations of the Study

This study had several limitations. One challenge that was present alongside the strengths of concept mapping as a research approach is that stakeholders were needed to complete each stage of the study. Convenience sampling was utilized in the form of seeking research participants via higher education social media platforms, and invitation emails to associated networks. This, as Nalavany et al. (2011) noted was possible, required a good deal of effort in conducting outreach and recruiting participants through multiple phases of the research study. An additional dimension to how this impacted the research process was that it prolonged the amount of time each phase was available online for participants to complete, which in turn resulted in some time gaps in between phases.

The second limitation of note was the limited participant pool both in terms of a convenience sampling, and the overall small sample size in all phases of the study. A fair amount of time investment from participants was required to fully complete the sorting and rating activities in phase two, which likely impacted participation. Total participation was less than a hundred: 73 participants contributed ideas; the sorting data was useable from 35 participants; 37 participants successfully completed the importance rating and 25 completed the extent rating.

Overall, there were more than 100 participants who completed the informed consent; however, less than 40 completed the activities. It is also possible that some potential participants became confused by the web-based sorting process, and its return to the landing

page for rating. Rosas and Kane (2012) reviewed 69 different concept mapping studies and found that the average number of participants in a project was 155.78. While the number of participants for each phase was well above the recommended 10–12 to produce a valid concept map (Jackson & Trochim, 2002), the small sample size limits the generalizability of the results.

A third area of limitation is with the analysis of results. In concept mapping, stakeholder participants are at the core of the study, in this case, first-generation professionals. Participants often play an active role in the idea synthesis and other analysis (Rosas & Kane, 2012). The broad nature and anonymity of this study prevented all participants from having a voice in analysis.

Similar to other concept mapping studies that have been conducted (Burke et al., 2005), it is possible that I as the researcher may have included or excluded items that the larger group of participants themselves may not have chosen. To help mitigate this risk, this research study involved a stakeholder group in the form of the participant review committee to assist in the data reduction process. A sub-set of this group was able to engage in idea synthesis by providing thoughts and feedback on the idea statements. The full participant review committee offered insight and input to the cluster maps; however, it is still noteworthy that they represented only a small portion of total participants.

The fourth area of limitation lies in limiting the study only to those working in non-clinical roles in higher education. The decision to focus on this population was grounded in the fact that there is formal supervision required of most clinical roles such as social work and counseling psychology, which is not the case in other roles. Similarly, there are formalized modes of supervisor-training and preparedness in clinical fields, which are not present in other

areas of higher education. It should be noted that the findings of this study only reflect the viewpoints of those in non-clinical roles who have received supervision from other professionals who may or may not have received formal supervisor preparedness training.

Another area of limitation is in interpretation of the ideas of "success" and "well-being." Participants who took part in the idea generation phase of the study were simply asked to brainstorm ideas of what they need from a supervisor to support their well-being and success. They were not presented with the descriptions of my conceptualization of these ideals as described herein. As a result, the brainstormed ideas are based on individual participants' ideals of success and well-being, which may or may not be aligned with the descriptions I outlined here.

The final area of limitation lies with me, as the researcher, from the standpoint of experience and researcher-bias. While I received coaching and support from colleagues, my experience in conducting concept mapping research is limited. As a part of this study, I was both becoming more comfortable with the research method as well as the web-based software used to support ease of participation. I set out to design a research process that would result in an unbiased study. However, as is outlined in Chapter I's positionality section, I am a first-generation professional who supervises others and is supervised. This may cause the reader to question the lens through which I presented the interpretation of results and suggestions for action that were included in the discussion.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study has begun the exploration of seeking to understand the supervisory needs of first-generation individuals as they have transitioned from their undergraduate careers into and

through their professional careers in higher education. Future research could examine the student to professional transition via narrative inquiry. Questions for interview could include such themes as support and expectations. For example, “What types of support did you expect to receive prior to graduation?” “What types of support did you expect to receive as a part of your onboarding to your new role?” and “Were your needs met, and if so, how?” Hearing more about the associated stories could provide insight to career services offices working with students as well as to human resources departments who work with new employees.

Results of this study brought forth the viewpoints of first-generation professionals. There could be merit in further research centering the perceptions of the colleagues and supervisors of first-generation professionals. This could bring light to blind-spots and also present different avenues by which to support the ideals of well-being and success for first-generation professionals.

As illustrated in Chapter IV, there were interesting findings across demographic data. People of color reported lower rates of having their needs met than did their white counterparts. Those who reported being beyond the early stages of their career reported lower levels of having their needs met than did their early-career colleagues. Those working at large institutions reported having their needs met to a lesser degree than did their counterparts at smaller institutions. It could be of value to research why these differences exist, and what impact this is having on the well-being and success of these groups.

Similarly, most all participants in this study held a master’s degree. There could be merit in seeking to duplicate the study with the added participant criteria of having attained a bachelor’s degree only. This would enable the researcher to examine transition-related needs

and developmental differences more closely in the responses. Additional layers to this could include examining the differences between new professionals who are coming from institutions that offered a high degree of resources for first-gen students versus those that did not.

Another area to be explored that could be adjacent to this study is the salience of identity. As was presented by a colleague during an original conception of my study idea, some first-generation professionals do not recognize being first in their families to complete a four-year degree as being salient to their overall self-concept or lived experiences. It could be interesting to explore how, or if, the salience of more dominant identities, impacts how one leverages resources (such as supervision) as a professional toward well-being and success.

Conclusion

The purpose of this dissertation was to learn, directly from first-generation professionals working in higher education, what they believe they need from their supervisors to support their well-being and success. This research also sought to discover how important participants thought that each need statement was, as well to gain insight to what extent the identified needs are being met. The findings of this study indicate that first-generation professionals have identified six need areas that supervisors can address to support their well-being and success. These are: (a) Professional Growth and Development; (b) Institutional Onboarding; (c) Guidance and Understanding; (d) Communication and Feedback; (e) Humanity; and (f) Cultural Intelligence.

The identified need statements were aligned with the strengths, skills, and resiliencies that are known about those who identify as first-generation. This made the utilization of Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth Theory and Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent et

al., 2000) particularly apropos. These frameworks also lent to being intentional about approaching the need statements through an asset-based lens in seeking to make sense of the findings, and considerations for practice.

While the participants were seeking the informational context required to successfully navigate within their institutions, they wanted to be able to do so without assimilating. Participants' self-efficacy, professional aspirations, and desire to integrate their personals lives and values also shown through. This call from participants to be valued for who they are and what they bring to their workplace was particularly striking to me and will be a lesson to carry forward into my own practice.

Racial identity, longevity of career, and the size of their institution all emerged as salient factors in how participants reported experiencing the extent to which their needs are being met. This presents a case for the consideration of identity-conscious supervision (R. Brown et al., 2019) particularly as it relates to both supporting individuals and seeking to change discriminatory systems. While being sensitive to societal and institutional oppression, it continues to be imperative that supervisors center supervisees' individual backgrounds, skills, interests, and place in life. This is another core take-away for me both in terms of how I present myself in seeking to leverage my own supervisors for support, but also in leading supervisees.

Lastly, across each of the thematic clusters there is a gap in between how first-gen professionals rated the importance of needs and the extent to which those needs have been met by a supervisor. With this, the importance of consistent, direct communication about needs and expectations is clear. While keeping in mind the implications that were described for the field as a whole in terms of actions to maintain or improve, it is also key to be individually

responsive to contextual needs as they are shared. As was highlighted in a number of the idea statements, it is not just about what is needed from the supervisory relationship, but how shared humanity presents itself. Care, patience, grace, and understanding are all words that were used in participants' statements. We would all do well to offer these attributes to ourselves and others.

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APPENDIX A: UNEDITED IDEA GENERATION ENTRIES SUBMITTED BY STUDY PARTICIPANTS

1. an understanding that I need more support than others
2. GUIDANCE
3. Support for my personal goals outside of the position as well as my professional goals.
4. Challenge and support - push me to be successful, provide me with new opportunities to grow and learn, allow me to fail and support me in learning.
5. Someone who can share personal experiences from their time in a position similar to mine, lessons they have learned in their careers, and someone who can share institutional knowledge.
6. Acknowledging and validating my opinions, suggestions, and feedback. Understanding that the imposter syndrome doesn't go away just because I graduated, so affirmation and recognition go a long way.
7. Understanding that first Gen professionals juggle more than just work. It's important for me to have a life outside of work and the opportunity to still be a higher Ed professional.
8. Opportunity for growth, learning and flexibility.
9. Positive feedbackProfessional development opportunitiesLeadership opportunities FlexibilityConstructive criticismSupportActive listening
10. Freedom to implement my own ideas and to live my life outside of work.
11. To remove any barriers to allow for my continued growth, promotion, and success.
12. support, preparation, and encouragement of 'what's next' in the career ladder that I have no concept of
13. honor and value the 'additional work' i do mentoring and guiding other first-gens that does not fall specifically into my job duties.
14. Information and connections, some concepts seen as 'professional standards' may not be familiar and connections because i did not bring my own in
15. Allow for cross departmental collaboration.
16. Encourage and provide support for career development.
17. Recognize the skill-set that I bring to the department (ie. Bilingual, unique certifications, etc.) and be compensated for it.
18. Modeling work life balance and appropriate commitment to the position.
19. I need help adjusting to middle class life as well as my specific role.
20. Someone who can validate my feelings related to my work, I need someone to answer questions about more than just job tasks.
21. Provide clear directions on the goals of our team. Provide support and continuous opportunities to touch base.
22. I was that student so I fight hard and possibly harder than I should sometimes
23. understand imposter feelings are real, often, and overwhelming
24. political and ecosystem insights
25. Care about me as a whole person
26. Be patient with questions and give concrete answers
27. support work life balance and self care
28. freedom to bring my own skill set even if it hasn't been tried here before
29. entrance to the college networks I need to create my own capital

30. clear expectations on dealing with the unspoken rules
31. Consideration for who am I as a person and what will work best for me as long as I meet our goals and outcomes as a division
32. Establishment of a team culture that values all of our backgrounds and experiences versus just the white middle class status quo
33. Establishment of regular conversations about developmental goals versus task goals
34. If possible, set a clear 1:1 agenda so I know what to expect and can prepare accordingly. Guessing about what we should talk about is frustrating at best. At worst, I don't always know what I should be discussing from my own work versus supervisees
35. It would be useful for me to have a mentor who is willing to support my growth to next level leadership within the institution
36. I need encouragement and affirmations to work through self doubt and imposter syndrome without being belittled
37. Create space for reflection and change related to class and it's role in what is seen as "professional"
38. encouragement to speak up- this doesnt come naturally to me
39. understanding my disabilities and recognizing the role those play in my job
40. recognition that mental health is important
41. opportunity to learn about jobs outside of mine so I can grow as an SA professional and find ways to grow outside of my current office
42. Constructive criticism - don't just tell me I'm wrong; show me how to do it correctly and how to grow
43. Support when I advocate for something in the workplace
44. opportunities for professional development that are supported by the office
45. transparency and open communication
46. Space to be myself- I don't need to assimilate to be effective
47. Space to ask questions about university norms and expectations
48. connections to professional networks
49. put some effort into getting to know me
50. investment in guiding my professional path
51. Listen. When I tell you that I am having difficulties, don't blow it off and say things like this will pass. Help me figure out a plan to get through the difficulties.
52. Stop acting like a master's degree makes you better than me because I only hold a bachelor's degree.
53. Dependability - if you say you are going to be there, be there.
54. Acknowledgement other than "thanks".
55. Reference materials so I can look up answers on my own rather than 'bothering' supervisor/staff for answers - many 1st gens are reluctant to admit ignorance due to increased experiences of imposter syndrome
56. Receptivity to new ways of seeing and doing - respect that as a low-income/1st gen student, I might have insights others don't
57. Feedback that is specific so I can continue growth in positive directions & change behaviors/patterns that don't work
58. Clear directions; detailed onboarding

59. Understanding of my drive and ambition.
60. Cultural understanding.
61. Explicit instructions and directions.
62. Explicitly stating the “unspoken rules” or some other type of slightly less formal mentorship - otherwise I’ll never know
63. Explaining things in detail/not assuming I’ve done or know about things from earlier experience
64. Positive affirmations
65. Lots of specific directions
66. Understanding of feeling inadequate or imposter syndrome and to give regular feedback for improvement
67. Advice on how to navigate my professional career and what roadblocks I may face
68. Flexibility to leave work when I need to if family situations come up, even if others would not consider those situations an “emergency”
69. Openness to process situations and how to address them
70. Understanding of the first-generation college experience
71. Feedback on how to advocate effectively
72. Acceptance of me as a person
73. Clear directions for new tasks, deadlines, and expectations.
74. Providing constructive criticism in a helpful and non aggressive way.
75. Understanding of imposter syndrome and how it can impact me in the workplace.
76. Honestly and skill-building guidance on the skills that don't come from school in work. I.e. preventing burnout, boundaries, imposter syndrome, etc.
77. Support, honest feedback, and opportunities for growth.
78. Clear communication, support, and professional development.
79. Understanding why we advocate for student staff to be paid more because those who are less affluent and less supported through college miss out on valuable leadership opportunities because of money.
80. Respecting that sometimes you just can't relate to first gen-students better than a former one.
81. Understanding that I did not have the opportunity to do low paid internships or conferences in grad school because I couldn't afford to not work, and couldn't afford a conference + travel + hotel, etc
82. Understanding that I do not have wealthy parents to supplement my meager income, or to help me with medical costs.
83. Understanding that I do not know the complete ins and outs of Higher Education because I was not exposed to it growing up.
84. Grace and understanding especially during the pandemic and life outside of work.
85. Transparency, advocacy, approachable, and professional development.
86. Support and create an environment that is safe and inclusive. Promotes growth and development
87. Flexibility, transparency, understanding of how I navigate the world and the workplace as Black man, consistent feedback
88. Understanding and grace; open to new ideas and change

89. care about me and my life outside of this job
90. understanding of how societal issues play out in the department- racism is real here
91. an approach that is relevant to me as a Black man
92. Grace. Some things i.e. political capital did not come as easy for me. This gave me anxiety when I first started being a mid-level career professonal.
93. Understanding. My experince has been a unique one to sit where I am today.
94. Accessible
95. Not easily irritated by questions regardless of how small they may be.
96. Honest conversation around work performance and ways for improvement.
97. Growth mindset
98. Grace
99. Genuine Care
100. Authenticity
101. Patience
102. Understanding
103. I need support and clear directions. I was given two interns for my program and my supervisor did not explain what their roles would be. I am juggling so many roles within my VAD that I feel like I am drowning at times.
104. to advocate for my well-being by encouraging use of paid time off and salary increases
105. inclusion in high level decisions that impact my day to day work
106. transparency about institutional decisions that impact my day to day work
107. positive feedback in addition to constructive feedback
108. transparent information about professional development opportunities and funding
109. someone who is transparent regarding decisions, process and who does not have hidden agendas
110. someone who can determine whether I need to be micro-managed or can be given the autonomy to do my job
111. an advocate to champion my career advancement/promotion
112. honest evaluation of my skills and abilities to aid in career progression
113. To include me at the “table” and more importantly to advocate for me.
114. more professional autonomy that shows I am trusted to do my job
115. networking opportunities
116. making their decision-making process more transparent
117. help with having a career path-how can I progress in SA
118. more opportunities for professional development
119. Continued access to development, education, and conferences.
120. Guidance for navigating higher up conversations.
121. Regular feedback
122. Clear communication regarding expectations
123. Encouragement to take time off even when it seems like there is too much to get done.
124. To realize that walking alongside students doesn’t mean I’m just “hanging out with them”
125. adequate resources to do my job
126. to admit that being Black means something at this college

127. introductions to other leaders across the college
128. access to professional conferences
129. Guidance through what being an SA professional looks like outside the classroom/textbook
130. Recognize my successes
131. Allowing me to gain experience it areas outside my immediate role.
132. acknowledgement of my successes
133. support and guidance navigating college politics
134. ….associate benefits with my salary. This concept is foreign as I see my work as hourly even when getting paid a salary. This means that using benefits such as time off feels like burden. It's as though I'm taking advantage of the system.
135. …to people, professional development opportunities, and resources. I might need help networking and getting connected. I also might not know how to do things such as research. I might need help navigating benefits like insurance. I might not….
136. Role model what a professional does. Understand that I will want to learn and take initiative, but I almost always am doing so without a roadmap. I need encouragement when imposter syndrome sneaks up. I would like a supervisor to introduce me to ppl

APPENDIX B: STATEMENT NUMBERS AND IDEA STATEMENTS

Statement Number	Statement
1	remove barriers to my growth and success
2	support and encouragement when I speak up in the workplace
3	dependability; if you say you're going to be there, be there
4	advocate for my career advancement and resources
5	inclusion "at the table" on decisions that impact me
6	guidance for my next career steps
7	encourage and support my career development
8	opportunities to gain experience outside of my current role/office
9	understanding of my drive and ambition
10	honest evaluation of my skills and abilities
11	help adjusting to my specific role
12	help navigating middle class life and resources
13	grace and understanding in dealing with unspoken higher ed rules
14	space to be myself without having to assimilate to be seen as professional
15	understanding that my family cannot supplement my income to help with life expenses
16	honest, authentic, transparent communication
17	active listening
18	opportunities to touch base
19	clear 1:1 meetings so I know what to expect
20	space for reflection and processing situations
21	clear communication
22	a team environment that values MY background and experiences
23	cultural understanding
24	understanding of how I navigate the world as a person of color
25	an approach that is relevant to me as a person of color
26	acknowledgement that racism exists in our department/college
27	answers beyond job tasks
28	clear direction and communication about expectations
29	concrete answers
30	detailed onboarding/information related to new tasks
31	positive feedback
32	honest constructive feedback
33	feedback on how to advocate effectively
34	regular/consistent feedback

35	flexibility
36	flexibility to leave work if family situations arise
37	opportunities for growth
38	growth mindset
39	leadership opportunities
40	push to be successful
41	share guidance from their own professional experience
42	advice on how to navigate my career and any roadblocks I face
43	challenge and support
44	reference materials and openness to processing how to address situations
45	role model what a professional does
46	patience and understanding with questions
47	understanding that imposter syndrome doesn't go away
48	understanding of imposter syndrome
49	encouragement and affirmations to work through self-doubt and imposter syndrome
50	understanding of how imposter syndrome impacts me in the workplace
51	share institutional knowledge/information
52	introductions and connections so I can build my own networks and capital
53	guidance for navigating university politics and norms
54	understand I want to take initiative, but am often doing so without a roadmap
55	genuine care and patience
56	guidance on navigating workplace related burnout, boundaries, imposter syndrome, etc.
57	support for personal goals
58	effort in getting to know me
59	understanding of how mental health or disabilities impact my performance
60	regular conversations about developmental goals vs. task goals
61	opportunity for learning new skills
62	professional development opportunities and resources
63	understanding that I need more support than others
64	support
65	acknowledge and validate my opinions, suggestions and feedback
66	openness to new ideas and ways of seeing/doing things
67	professional autonomy that shows I am trusted to do my job
68	value and respect the additional work I do in mentoring other first-gens
69	recognize the unique skill set I bring to the department and compensate me for it
70	consideration for who I am as a person and what will work best for me
71	understand that I did not have the opportunity to do low paid internships or conferences because I could not afford to not work

72	understand that my experience has been a unique path to where I am today
73	affirmation and recognition of successes
74	grace and understanding that I am juggling more than just work
75	support my self-care and work life balance
76	model work life balance
77	care about me as a whole person

APPENDIX C: IDEA STATEMENTS WITHIN EACH CLUSTER

Professional Growth and Development (Cluster 1)

1- remove barriers to my growth and success
4- advocate for my career advancement and resources
5- inclusion "at the table" on decisions that impact me
6- guidance for my next career steps
7- encourage and support my career development
8- opportunities to gain experience outside of my current role/office
20- space for reflection and processing situations
33- feedback on how to advocate effectively
37- opportunities for growth
38- growth mindset
39- leadership opportunities
40- push to be successful
42- advice on how to navigate my career and any roadblocks I face
43- challenge and support
52- introductions and connections so I can build my own networks and capital
60- regular conversations about developmental goals vs. task goals
61- opportunity for learning new skills
62- professional development opportunities and resources

Institutional Onboarding (Cluster 2)

11- help adjusting to my specific role
30- detailed onboarding/information related to new tasks
41- share guidance from their own professional experience
44- reference materials and openness to processing how to address situations
45- role model what a professional does
51- share institutional knowledge/information
53- guidance for navigating university politics and norms

Guidance and Understanding (Cluster 3)

13- grace and understanding in dealing with unspoken higher ed rules
46- patience and understanding with questions
49- encouragement and affirmations to work through self-doubt and imposter syndrome
54- understand I want to take initiative, but am often doing so without a roadmap
56- guidance on navigating workplace related burnout, boundaries, imposter syndrome, etc.
68- value and respect the additional work I do in mentoring other first-gens
69- recognize the unique skill set I bring to the department and compensate me for it

76- model work life balance

Communication and Feedback (Cluster 4)

2- support and encouragement when I speak up in the workplace
10- honest evaluation of my skills and abilities
16- honest, authentic, transparent communication
17- active listening
18- opportunities to touch base
19- clear 1:1 meetings so I know what to expect
21- clear communication
27- answers beyond job tasks
28- clear direction and communication about expectations
29- concrete answers
31- positive feedback
32- honest constructive feedback
34- regular/consistent feedback
65- acknowledge and validate my opinions, suggestions and feedback
66- openness to new ideas and ways of seeing/doing things
67- professional autonomy that shows I am trusted to do my job
73- affirmation and recognition of successes

Humanity (Cluster 5)

3- dependability; if you say you're going to be there, be there
9- understanding of my drive and ambition
15- understanding that my family cannot supplement my income to help with life expenses
35- flexibility
36- flexibility to leave work if family situations arise
55- genuine care and patience
57- support for personal goals
58- effort in getting to know me
59- understanding of how mental health or disabilities impact my performance
63- understanding that I need more support than others
64- support
70- consideration for who I am as a person and what will work best for me
72- understand that my experience has been a unique path to where I am today
74- grace and understanding that I am juggling more than just work
75- support my self-care and work life balance
77- care about me as a whole person

Cultural Intelligence (Cluster 6)

12- help navigating middle class life and resources
14- space to be myself without having to assimilate to be seen as professional
22- a team environment that values MY background and experiences
23- cultural understanding
24- understanding of how I navigate the world as a person of color
25- an approach that is relevant to me as a person of color
26- acknowledgement that racism exists in our department/college
47- understanding that imposter syndrome doesn't go away
48- understanding of imposter syndrome
50- understanding of how imposter syndrome impacts me in the workplace
71- understand that I did not have the opportunity to do low paid internships or conferences because I could not afford to not work